

MAY 2023

the Hummer

free

Arts,
Entertainment
& Ideas



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May's Events



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You Will Be Offended



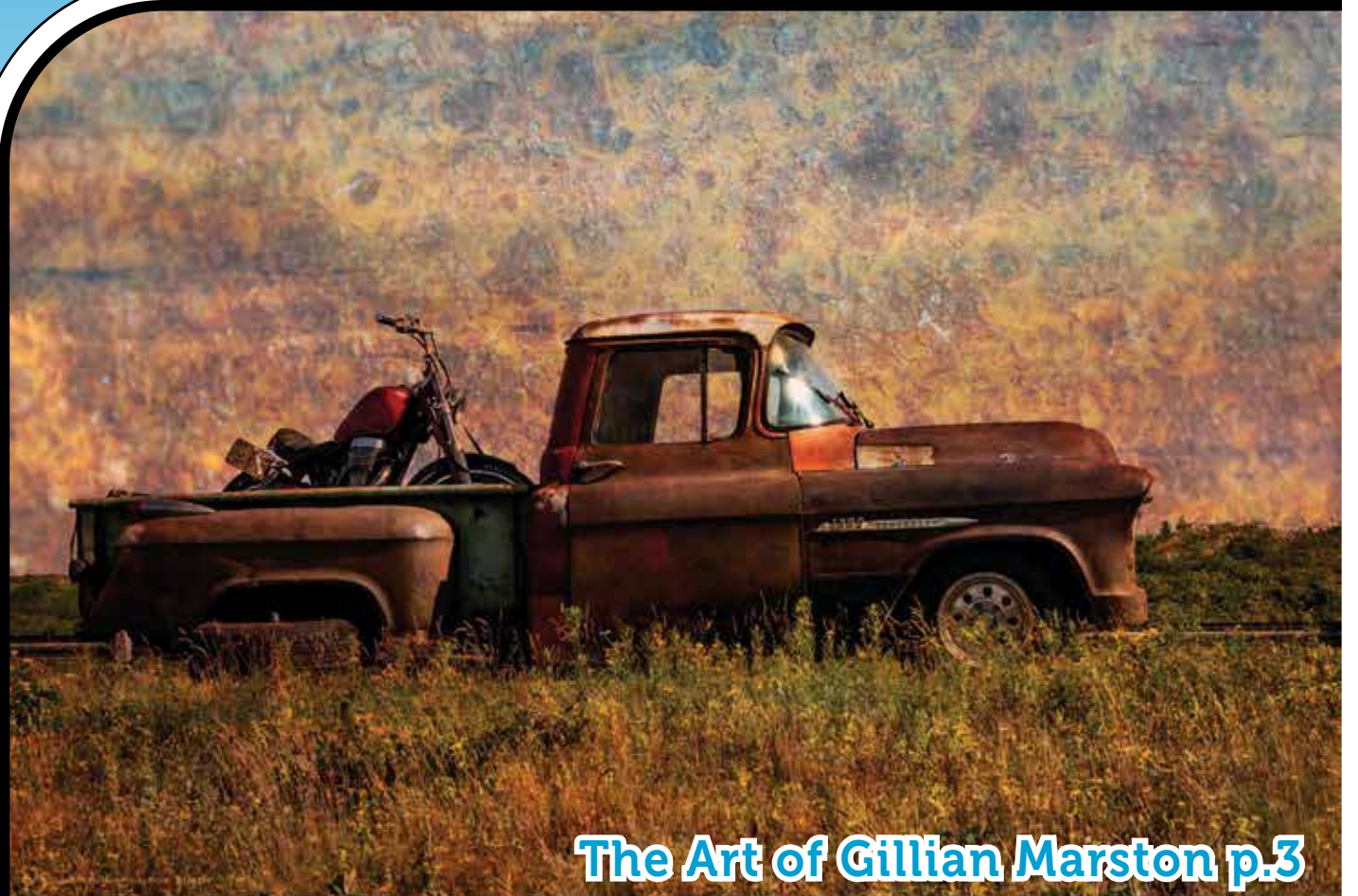
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Farmers' Markets

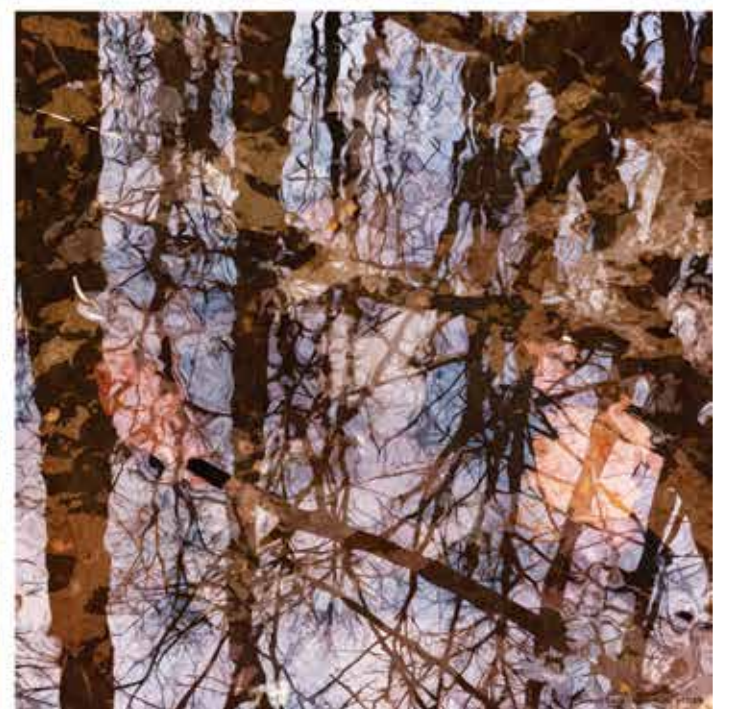
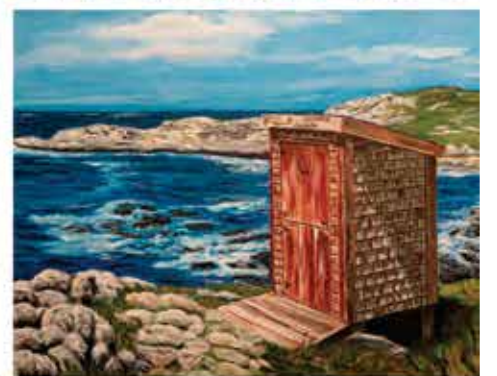


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Nunsense in Perth



The Art of Gillian Marston p.3



May is all about Mother's Day

Take your ultra special mum out for brunch, buy her some flowers or a handmade gift, and if you really want to do something special, move out of her basement! I'd be happy to help you find your ideal first home.

Pat's Picks for May: \$100 gift certificate (for only \$80) from **8008 Lingerie** <8008lingerie.com>
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Gloria Gopher Sighting — Alameda Update!

By Heather Phaneuf

As mentioned in the April issue of theHumm, the magnificent statue of Gloria Gopher sculpted by Denisa Prochazka and destined to appear on the Almonte Alameda soon, is now being poured in bronze by Dale Dunning.

This legacy piece honours not just this charming creature, but also her very close friend and partner-in-puppetry, Noreen Young. Want to join us in honouring a girl and a gopher? Simply e-transfer to <payments@lanarkcounty.ca> or make a cheque out to Lanark County, which can be left at Baker Bob's on Mill Street. Make sure you note that your gift is in support of the Almonte Alameda Sculpture. Tax receipts will be issued.

Go Gopher Go — you've made Almonte proud!



Who's Reading theHumm

In November of 2022, **Rosalind Reid** sent in this gorgeous shot from Cairo Egypt, and wrote: "This paper has been around the world and back."

Thanks for taking it on your travels, Rosalind!

We Goofed!

On page 26 of our April issue, we accidentally attributed the artwork of Steve Hewer to Barbara Jordan. The image was of a *location* in Jordan, but was most definitely created by Steve. To see more of his work, please visit <SteveHewer.com>. Thanks to Barbara Jordan for drawing the error to our attention! You can see her works at <rideaulakesartists.com/barbara-jordan>. Better yet, you can see both the artists *and* their work at the Arts Carleton Place Fine Art Show & Sale taking place on May 6 and 7 from 10AM to 4:30PM at the Carleton Place Arena!

Humble Thought

"Socially and politically, we are in a cycle wherein everything needs to appeal to as many people as possible. This means 'success' is now defined as mass appeal — rather than allowing something that is polarizing to be motivation for deeper understanding."

— Keith Busher

"The juried democracy of art has watered it down to a family friendly, PG version of what is deemed acceptable. But life is complex, and to only permit the visual expression of art as sunsets and birch trees is a disservice to the beauty inherent in the struggle of living."

— Patrick John Mills

To read more provocative thoughts on art, see the article entitled "You Will Be Offended" on page 5 of this issue.

TICKETS PLEASE

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Murdered to Death
by Rural Root Theatre
April 30–May 6



Introducing the 7 Gifts
All My Relations
Almonte Old Town Hall
May 4



Nunsense
by Studio Theatre Perth
May 4–14



Imagine Conference
What Now, Lanark County?
Almonte Civitan Hall
May 6



REPLAY
Tribute to The Beatles
Farrell Hall, Perth
May 13



umberlune CD Release
Bridge Masters Brewery, Perth
May 18



Davis, Wright & Eckert
MERA Schoolhouse
May 27



Japhy Sullivan
MERA Schoolhouse
May 28



A Joyful Spring
by the CP Town Singers
All Nations Church
May 28 & 30



Lance Luce Concert
St. Paul's United, Perth
June 4



A Taste of the County
by ConnectWell Therapeutic Riding
Stonefields Estate
June 5



Art in the Garden
Kiwi Gardens
June 16–18



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theHumm is a monthly arts, entertainment and ideas newspaper delivered free to businesses and visitor attractions in Almonte, Perth, Carleton Place, Westport, Pakenham, Carp, Arnprior, 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
By email or on disk.

Content Deadline:
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Thumm's up this month to:
Everyone knows that thrift stores are full of hidden treasures — usually it's a lamp that really pulls a room together — but Almonte resident and record collector **Allan Brown** struck it rich recently when he discovered a rare early recording by a teenaged Neil Young and his then band The Squires while browsing at **The Hub**. The single *The Sultan*, recorded in 1963, has sold for up to \$4000. After a bit of research, Allan listed the disc at \$1500 and soon accepted an offer of \$1000. What truly makes this story special is that Allan then split the profits with **The Hub**!

Gillian Marston — Don't Fence Me In

Her paintings and her photography are as wide-ranging as her interests, her travels and her accomplishments. Marston is open to life, to new experiences and new challenges. This intrepid retiree has reinvented herself as an accomplished acrylics painter and fine art photographer. As she puts it, "Art is a way to explore all of the creative ideas that occur to me. For me art is like travel — I love change; I love exploring and trying new things."

by Sally Hansen

An avid photographer since the age of twenty-one, she has embraced the challenge of using her images as her artistic medium of choice to explore her creativity and further her conceptual ideas. Using a wide variety of post-processing techniques, Gilly transforms her photos of beautiful landscapes and familiar objects into portraits that look like they have been painted on canvas, or captured in an alternate universe. Her inventive renditions of a broken-down Yukon truck or a Labrador fishing boat or a pattern in the branches of a tree seduce the viewer to experience familiar objects with new eyes.



The endless possibilities afforded by infinitely flexible software options, coupled with current camera gear, continue to inspire her to explore a wide variety of her favourite subjects in new ways. During the social isolation of Covid she found herself examining abstractions in nature, looking at patterns in the leaves, reflections in water, and creating new compositions in original ways. She describes them as "Nature's patterns abstracted in layers of texture." Her striking photographic portrait of a "Chickadee in Winter" is a tribute to the lasting influence of her mother's passion as a birder and naturalist.

Gilly's celebratory acrylic paintings are a testament to her enduring love of nature and the sea. Her latest paintings comprise two series: her *North West* series

focuses on travel in the western prairies, mountains and Alaska; and her *Tide's Out* series depicts a close-up view of Maritime and Maine seashore life. The signature piece in this series is a colourful four-panel tribute to Rachel Carson, author in 1962 of *Silent Spring*, and who is widely credited with initiating the contemporary environmental movement.

Marston's home in Beckwith Township is in a forested area with a large vibrant marsh, providing her with a convenient and reliable source of inspiration, but she ventures far afield for more exotic material. She has just returned from Tanzania — her latest jaunt with her equally adventurous spouse of twenty years, Suzanne Deschênes. Years ago the couple flew to the Pribilof Islands off the coast of Alaska to see pelagic birds. They sought out different species on a catamaran amid the seven Dry Tortugas islands, the westernmost and most isolated of the Florida Keys.

Since retirement they have taken many month-long trips with their cats in their motorhome, visiting natural areas for hiking, birding and photography and to indulge their love of deserts and rugged landscapes. They often seek out windswept geological formations in the southwest U. S., including the popular Utah rock formations, the Chiricahua Mountain "sky island" hoodoos and balancing rocks in southern Arizona, and "little gems like Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument in New Mexico". Their motorhome is, of course, equipped with a compact studio.

An Appetite for Adventure

The daughter of a serviceman, Gillian was born in Brandon, Manitoba, and her adventures started when she was just six months old. Her dad was posted to Kingston until she was seven years old, then the family moved to Ghana for two years, back to Ottawa, then to England during her teens, and finally back to Ottawa. She credits her parents with her appetite for travel and her love of new experiences. When her mother became an avid birder and blossomed into an amazing naturalist, Gilly joined in.

Despite loving art and photography, she never envisioned herself as an artist. She excelled at university and went on to a career in finance and accounting, and later worked as an IT technician and network engineer. She didn't really notice the lack of a creative outlet in her life until her membership with the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club resulted in her accepting responsibility for designing a publication for the organization. She became Chair of their Education and Publicity Committee and ended up creating a big display for an Ottawa show to celebrate Earth Day — "Because I had a truck to transport the displays," she quips modestly. This led to designing and creating other promotional displays, and her creative side was unleashed.

She decided to learn how to paint and enrolled in painting classes. She received advice from the owner of an art framing business to join an arts organization.



She did, and began to go to local art shows, forming supportive friendships at Arts Carleton Place and Manotick Art Association with artist Sandy Armstrong and others. With Sandy's encouragement, she began painting regularly with local artists. The more she participated, the more she realized that she loved the world of art, and being a member of the artistic community. "Painting is my way to be part of that world; that is what I would miss if I gave it up."

"Gutsy and Determined Women"

This enterprising go-getter is now in the process of establishing a not-for-profit fine art gallery for the Carleton Place community. Marston has combined forces with Colleen Gray, Pamela Stewart and Ginny Fobert to create a "community 'hub' for local art, art education and creative events". Their website at <cpgallery.ca> states: "Our aim is to elevate and support Carleton Place and regional area artists/artisans... by providing them with affordable and accessible gallery, studio, workshop and meeting space, and by helping them to sell their work". This quartet, whom Marston describes as "gutsy and determined women," bring a combined total of 39 years as professional artists with exhibitions at 45 area shows to the undertaking. The fast-growing community of Carleton Place will benefit in many ways when they secure a suitable location and realize their far-reaching and generous goal.

Arts Carleton Place Fine Art Show

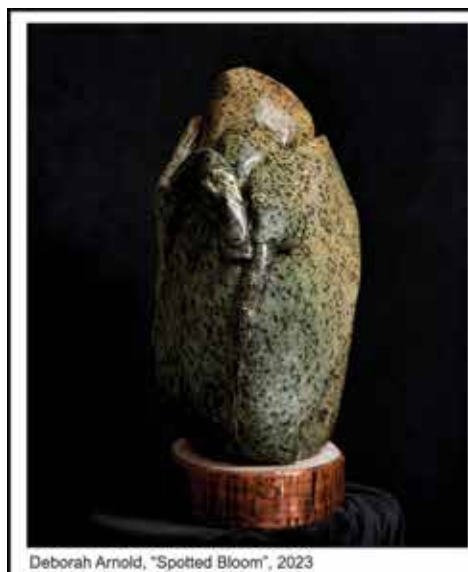
On May 6 and 7 you can drop in at the Carleton Place Arena at 75 Neelin Street from 10AM to 4:30PM and enjoy Gilly Marston's inventive fine art photography and her heartwarming acrylic tributes to the natural world she values so much. Please refer to the back of her Artist Trading Card for a full set of her coordinates.



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Deborah Arnold, "Spotted Bloom", 2023

DEBORAH ARNOLD MARY PFAFF

Nexus

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Artists Reception: May 27, 2pm-4pm



34 Mill St, Almonte ON
info@sivarulrasa.com
sivarulrasa.com
613.256.8033



Mary Pfaff, "A Thousand Years", 2023

WHO Gillian Marston
WHAT Acrylic Paintings, Fine Art Photography
WHERE Home Studio in Beckwith Township,
 <artbygilly@explornet.ca>; <beevergallery.ca>;
 <artscarletonplace.com/gillian-marston>;
 <facebook.com/Gillymarston>
WHEN May 6 & 7, 10AM-4:30PM, Arts Carleton Place
 Juried Fine Art Show & Sale, Carleton Place Arena,
 free parking and admission;
 Home Studio by appointment
WHY "For me art is like travel — I love change; I love
 exploring and trying new things."

• ARTIST TRADING CARD •



The original TNIM players for the performance of *The Black Chair* at the EODL One-Act Festival in 2022. Back row (from left to right) actors: Anne MacLaughlan, Peyton Horning, Connie Coleman, Roly Roy, Andrea Lewandowski and Ian Bell. Front Row: Margaret Shearman (director) and Barry Patrick (SM).

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TNIM Spring Production Follows Loss of an Icon

If you'd ever had an opportunity to meet with Margaret Shearman, she would have likely encouraged you to get involved with your local theatre. The beloved and respected grand-dame of Theatre Night in Merrickville (TNIM) passed away over the Easter weekend, creating a deep loss for TNIM members and across the community. Over the years, Margaret had participated in more than fifty TNIM productions as an actor, stage manager, artist and director. She also served as an executive director for the organization. While her talents, accomplishments and accolades are too numerous to mention here, an aptly detailed list is included in her online obituary at <Legacy.com>. Margaret's love of theatre was widely known, so much so that her son Chris says, "In lieu of flowers, please go out and enjoy a play".

Over the last few months, Margaret was working with TNIM to bring forward their spring production, an evening of three unique one-act plays. She was planning to repeat her direction of the play *The Black Chair* (by Peter Paylor) which she previously presented at the Eastern Ontario Drama League (EODL) Festival in 2022. That performance received rave reviews and several award nominations. *The Black Chair* follows a photographer's portrait sessions with various subjects who gradually reveal intimate elements of their own humanity. There are laughs, deep insights, a few "a-ha moments" and some surprising realizations.

The original cast from the EODL production will once again bring their characters to the stage. Without a doubt, this will be a brilliant show as the players pay homage to (and take one final bow with) Margaret. In keeping with the old adage "the show must go on", TNIM president Helen Steenburgh will assume the director's chair for this performance. The other two plays included in the spring production are *The Green Thumb Gang* (also by Peter Paylor), directed by Omar Symoni, and *Making Friends* (by Guy Newsham), directed by Barry Patrick.

TNIM thanks Complete Real Estate Pros with local Realtor partner Kristy Morrison for their sponsorship of this production. Shows will take place at the Merrickville Community Centre, 106 Read Street on May 11, 12, 13 at 7:30PM, and on May 14 at 2PM. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased online at <merrickvilletheatre.org> or at the door. Inquiries can be directed to <hfrommerr@gmail.com>. Please see the ad included in this issue.

For more information on fundraising events and how you can support TNIM, please check out <merrickvilletheatre.org>, their Facebook page (Theatre Night in Merrickville), or Instagram account (@merrickvilletheatre). TNIM is a Registered Charity and tax receipts are available.

— Submitted by Theatre Night in Merrickville

Joanne Beaton

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 The wood pellet stove makes a cozy winter entertaining space, and in summer you can enjoy campfires at the fire pit and kayak or canoe right off the dock. The garage provides plenty of room for parking & toys. Minutes to the OVR trail, you can bike to town for coffee or dinner. You won't want to miss this one!
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“You Will Be Offended”

Three internationally collected and award-winning local artists — Keith Busher, Jana Jaros and Patrick John Mills — are coming together in a group show to be held at the Art Factory Warehouse in Renfrew from May 5 until June 10. Entitled *You Will Be Offended*, the curated exhibition is an invitation for viewers to revisit the true purpose of art, to embrace the emotions evoked, and to learn more about something they may initially resist. The goal is to remind us that discomfort leads to growth, and that curiosity is more powerful than judgement.

The interplay of Busher’s sculptural creations, Jaros’s figurative work, and Mills’s abstract expressionism sheds light on the implications of current social trends such as online censorship and cancel culture which block public discourse and promote intolerance. Busher, a multimedia artist working from his studio in Perth, notes: “Socially and politically, we are in a cycle wherein everything needs to appeal to as many people as possible. This means ‘success’ is now defined as mass appeal — rather than allowing something that is polarizing to be motivation for deeper understanding.”

Mills, an abstract expressionist well known for dramatically thick oil paintings such as the *Malignant* series in this show, points to the trickle-down effect of increasing social pressure to be neutral and “politically correct” on the world of art. He says: “The juried democracy of art has watered it down to a family friendly, PG version of what is deemed acceptable. But life is complex, and to only permit the visual expression of art as sunsets and birch trees is a disservice to the beauty inherent in the struggle of living.” Mills explains that while there is a place for images of flowers and trees, it should not be at the expense of other expressions that are more raw, bold, or emotionally confronting.

After all, asks Pembroke-based artist Jaros, whose figurative pieces experience repeated online censorship, what is the role of art and the artist in our society? And whose yardstick is being used to determine for us what we are allowed to see? She says: “If we look to most public art spaces for the answer, you will see a limited scope of artistic style that appears to be complementary to a generalized ideal. But art is not decoration, and it is not created for the sole purpose of saleability. If my art sparks a feeling, a conversation, or a thought process in an individual, they should be allowed to have that experience and reach their own conclusions.”

Busher, whose striking sculptural selections are intended to communicate difficult topics, similarly worries about the current trend to “sanitize” art, and points to a two-fold loss for the viewer. He says:



Three internationally collected and award-winning local artists — Keith Busher, Jana Jaros (above) and Patrick John Mills (at left) — are coming together in a group show to be held at the Art Factory Warehouse in Renfrew from May 5 until June 10.

Entitled *You Will Be Offended*, its goal is to remind us that discomfort leads to growth, and that curiosity is more powerful than judgement.

“Recently, Michelangelo’s iconic statue of David — widely considered to be a masterpiece of the Renaissance era — was deemed ‘controversial’ and ‘possibly pornographic’ at a Florida middle school. I’m not just concerned about the obvious cost to young people who are robbed of the opportunity to experience a classic work of art, I’m concerned that the voices of a few would lead to a complete rebranding of such a perfect work. Why are we always rushing to avoid very natural feelings of discomfort or offense? Where does it end?”

Indeed, the social costs of sanitizing art are widespread — it is a subtle form of censorship that both causes and contributes to dysfunctional communication between people with differing viewpoints. Jaros explains: “I remember a time when it was possible to share space with people that I didn’t agree with. But these days, in our hyperconnected, digitally obsessed world, the rise of ‘keyboard warriors’ and anonymous ‘factcheckers’ has created an air of hostility. You can find yourself bullied or completely obliterated, simply because you hold an unpopular opinion or because you fail to comply with arbitrarily imposed ‘standards and guidelines’. We have forgotten how to talk to each other.”

Art is typically the forum where we should be confronted, provoked, and provided with an opportunity to sit with a new idea or emotion, and to determine for ourselves what this teaches or reveals. Art is not to be translated, nor do we need protection from that which is visceral or raw. Mills, who has used his art to publicly share and communicate his journey with cancer, underscores the importance of art to convey and connect human experience: “Life includes suffering. Suffering such as depression, mental illness, addiction, abortion, suicide... These are human experiences that both inspire art and are expressed in art. This type of challenging art is an opportunity to take you out of your comfort zone. And in today’s world, it is crucial that we create space for both beautiful and challenging experiences for ourselves and others.”

Coming full circle on the purpose of the group show, Mills asks: “Is being offended always a bad thing? Or is your experience of ‘being offended’ an opportunity for you to have a deeper conversation, a deeper reflection, to learn and possibly better understand something?” Overall, this memorable group show encourages the viewer to be uncomfortable and to embrace multiple viewpoints. The artists hope to stimulate social dialogue and to encourage connection, reminding us of the inherent value of curiosity before judgement.

Meet the Artists

Opening night is May 5 from 5–8PM at the Art Factory’s Warehouse Gallery at 11 Bridge Street in Renfrew, and all three artists will be available. Regular exhibition hours are Wednesday to Saturday from 10AM to 5PM until June 10. Admission to the exhibition is always free.



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 Every Wed **Wings 'n Tunes** + Open Mic with **Shawn McCullough** (Country) 5:30-8:30
 Thu May 4 **May The Fourth+Doug Vanderhorden** (Folk/Rock Piano, Kingston) 5-8
 Fri May 5 **Cinco De Mayo+Sean Pinchin** (Blues Slide Guitar, Toronto) 6-9, \$10
 Sat May 6 **Eric Uren** on the patio (Folk/Rock, Westport), weather depending 5-8
 Sun May 7 **Matt Dickson** (Folk/Rock, Perth) 5-8
 Mon May 8 **The Co-conspirators** (Folk Duo, Montreal) 5-8
 Thu May 11 **Garrett Mason** (Nova Scotia Acoustic Blues Legend) 7-10, \$25
 Fri May 12 + Sat May 13 **Blues On The Rideau** with **David Rotundo Band** (High Powered Blues from Mexico/Toronto) 7-11, \$100+HST, Dinner+Show
 Sun May 14 **Matt Dickson** (Folk/Rock, Perth) 5-8
 Thu May 18 **Jazz Night** with **Spencer Evans Trio** 8-10, \$10
 Fri May 19 **Balogh + Smit** (Celtic/Folk duo, Picton) 5-8
 Sat May 20 **John Wilberforce/birds Of A Feather** (Folk/Rock, Kemptville) 5-8
 Sun May 21 **Head Over Heels** (Folk/Blues/Jazz, Gananoque) 5-8
 Thu May 25 **Gerald McGrath** (Folk/Rock, Kingston) 5-8
 Fri May 26 **Al Lerman** (Acoustic Blues/Harp Legend with Fathead, Havelock) 5-8, \$10
 Sat May 27 **Robert Keyes** (Finger-style Guitar, Pop/Jazz/Blues/Rock/Folk, Belleville) 5-8
 Sun May 28 **Head Over Heels** (Folk/Blues/Jazz, Gananoque) 5-8

Show some love to Mother Earth on Mother's Day weekend!

Journey Through the

DUMOINE RIVER





SATURDAY, MAY 13, 10:00 A.M. - 5:30 P.M.
VALLEY ARTISANS' CO-OP GALLERY
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Join this family-friendly fundraising art event for the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - Ottawa Valley chapter to protect nature in your community.

Special presentation on the importance of birch bark in local Indigenous culture by Pinock Smith.

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Jill Barber Returns to The Station Theatre

By Katharine Coleman

The Station Theatre is thrilled to welcome back Canada's sweetheart Jill Barber on May 13. The three-time Juno Award nominated singer-songwriter was last here in 2019, before the world changed. The fact that she is back to share her talent with us again is one more sign that we are emerging from challenges and getting the opportunity to come together again to enjoy art, music and theatre. What is even more exciting is she has a new album, *Homemaker*, just released in February, in which she invites listeners to embrace the beauty of our everyday lives! *American Songwriter* enthuses that this album will resonate with parents. Delicate and soft, swaddled in a dreamy arrangement of strings and keys, Barber's lush vocals are earnest and heavy with understanding.

Jill's critically acclaimed repertoire spans a transformative spectrum from folk to jazz and pop, and includes songs in both French and English. Following up her 2018 album *Metaphora*, which featured the #1 hit *Girl's Gotta Do*, her breakthrough jazz album *Chances* earned a Gold certification for 40,000 copies sold in Canada. Her next album, *Entre Nous*, will be out this June. Jill's work has earned numerous awards, such as the Sirius XM Jazz Artist of the Year and the East Coast Music Award for Album of the Year. Scores of fans celebrate her talent, including Blue Rodeo and Ron Sexsmith. Kris Kristofferson called Jill "a real songwriter, and a damn good songwriter." Her evocative and timeless songs have been featured in film and TV, scoring shows such as *Orange Is the New Black*, *The L Word* and *Heartland*, as well as powering a global advertising campaign for Chrysler with the track *Never Quit Loving You*. An unforgettable, enchanting performer, Jill has headlined iconic venues such as Toronto's Massey Hall and Roy Thompson Hall, Ottawa's National Arts Centre, Vancouver's Vogue Theatre and Tokyo's Blue Note and Cotton Club. And now she's coming back to our beautiful little theatre!

Visit <smithsfallstheatre.com/music> to find out about the show and to purchase your tickets. We are so lucky Jill wanted to pop by amid her travels to Ottawa and Kingston, and our tickets, at a fantastic price, are a great way to hear this lovely Canadian songstress. This is a wonderful way to spend a spring night, and



Don't take our word for it — Kris Kristofferson calls Jill Barber "a damn good songwriter"! Catch her at the Station Theatre on May 13.

with it happening the day before Mother's Day, Jill's *Homemaker* theme couldn't be more fitting.

The show starts at 8PM on Saturday, May 13. Tickets will be on sale at Special Greetings, 8 Russell Street in Smiths Falls, and can also be picked up half an hour before the show at the box office at 53 Victoria Avenue (if available). Online and telephone orders are available too. Tickets are \$39. For more info call 283-2244 or check us out online at <smithsfallstheatre.com>. While you're there, don't miss all the other events happening in May. We have our movie weekend on the 5th and 6th with the hit *Babylon*; music with Cliff Edwards on May 7, and local songstress Ambre McLean with a Mother's Day show on the 14th. Lots to see and hear at The Station Theatre in May!

Celebrate Spring at MERA

This spring, MERA (McDonalds Corners/Elphin Recreation & Arts) has plenty of activities, workshops and events for you to choose from. Join them at 974 Dalhousie Concession 9A in McDonalds Corners to discover how you can bring more arts into your life!

Adults and children over the age of twelve will enjoy using creative mending and decorating to turn their favourite item of clothing from something old to something new again! Bring your old clothes, leftover yarn, thread and ribbons, and Isidora Spielmann will guide you through the process and help you make the difficult decisions. This workshop will take place on May 6 from 10AM to 3PM.

On May 7, meet the artist Claude Lemay, who will showcase her abstract and contemporary art exhibition *Conversations with Colour* in Dean Hall. This meet the artist event is the perfect opportunity to view her works and purchase that "must have" piece.

Then on May 8, Kim Land comes all the way from Temiscaming, QC to guide you through the process of making your own custom light sculpture. She will supply all the electrical parts, wood base, frame, papers, and glue. This workshop takes place from 9AM to 2PM. Register at <meraschoolhouse@gmail.com>.

A weekly maker's market begins at MERA on May 20! The first Saturday will also include a vintage sale. Makers and vendors are encouraged to apply. MERA's market features local musicians and pizza made in the outdoor pizza oven. Enjoy the charming rural atmosphere and browse vendors to find a one-of-a-kind treasure. If you are interested in being a vendor, please send an email to <meraschoolhouse@gmail.com>.

MERA is committed to facilitating and promoting activities and programs for all ages which help bring this

rural community together, and to promoting awareness and understanding of the arts and wellbeing. For more information, please visit <meraschoolhouse.org>.



Parrot Play by artist Claude Lemay, whose works will be at MERA during the month of May

Nunsense Will Dance into Your Heart and Tickle Your Funnybone

By Jane Stott

From May 4 to 14 we are putting on the hilarious musical *Nunsense* at Studio Theatre in Perth. Seems we aren't the only theatre with nuns on parade! *The Sound of Music* graces the stage in Cobourg and Carleton Place, and in Brighton there's a production of *Drinking Habits*. Gananoque theatre is also highlighting nuns. There has been a mad scramble for nun paraphernalia by costumers in every theatre. I know — I was one of the scramblers! Who would have thought that scapulars and wimples would be in such demand?



Photo courtesy Terry Boyd

Meet some of the sisterhood of Hoboken, New Jersey: (l-r) Raynee Doner Hodge, Tracy Noonan, Dani Corbishley, Patti Greer and Claire Campbell

Patti Greer, aka Sister Robert Anne, shared with me how lucky she feels the cast has been to be able to sing, dance and act together for these past two months. Patti says that the laughter that continues to ensue makes her feel so alive. Mother Superior is Dani Corbishley, and she is proud to have been promoted after playing several of the other nuns in past productions. Dani is also our choreographer for the three other nuns — Claire Campbell, Tracy Noonan and Raynee Doner Hodge. You won't need to go to a floor show to see some fancy footwork, as these nuns can tap dance and do ballet.

Brent McLaren, our *Nunsense* director and Perth Town Crier, dedicates this show to the women whose voices he misses dearly — his mother Marjorie and his wife Shelley. Brent is our “energizer bunny” of enthusiasm and optimism. He knows this musical inside-out and is very pumped to make it the church steeple pinnacle of entertainment for young and old alike. Brent loves his jokes, just like I do. Jokes like “I try to avoid making nun jokes, but it's a farce of habit.” and “I know a nun who says her nightly prayers in the shower. She does it out of habit.”

I have the pleasure of working alongside Julia Egner and Marie Amyot — master costumers who are working on a ton of black and white material. I managed to snag a few nun costume bits and pieces from Suzart productions, but for the most part we had to start from scratch. Hems had to be raised 6 inches from the floor so that the robes won't get caught in the taps. That would be disastrous! I personally think it would be hilarious if our audience came dressed in white and black, so that the nuns on stage look out and imagine a sea of penguins, the Ascot race scene from *My Fair Lady*, or just a whole lot more nuns.

Reiner Silberhorn and his team make our set come to life with some amazing stage design, as *Nunsense* takes place in a local high school gym on the set of *Grease*. Painters Bruce Raby, Fiona Bladon and company spice it up with some crazy paint artistry.

Dave Corbishley, our theatre tech manager, has some serious *Nunsense* history. Dave stage managed

and designed *Nunsense* sound and light for a dinner theatre experience back in 2012 and later when the show went to the stage at Centrepoint. Dave Shaw and Mark Hooton will be working their magic in our tech booth while stage manager Katherine Hooton will be ever-present — wearing work boots and a tool belt I am told. Katherine will be rubbing elbows backstage with the creative Ann Hawthorne and her numerous props!

And yes, there is also a live onstage band with some great songs! Musicians Val Leavitt, Mark Mulrenin, Brent McLaren, Kevin McHale and Andy Williamson have been practicing to perfectly accompany every number in this hilarious musical.

You have eight chances to take in this comical piece of musical theatre. Show dates are May 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 and 13 at 7:30PM, and May 7 and 14 at 2PM. Tickets are \$27 (all fees included) and are available through Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434) or at the door. Opening night is \$5 off, and youth 17 and under are always half-price.

Nunsense is great family fun!

Fauré and Friends

On Saturday, May 6 the **Kanata Choral Society** will bring music by Fauré, Mozart, Gjeilo, Rutter and other composers to the stage.

The concert will open with the lovely *Cantique de Jean Racine*, followed by Fauré's *Requiem*.

From this romantic music, the programme will skip a century down to the music of Mozart, of which his *Ave Verum* and *Laudate Dominum* are favourites of many people.

The concert will end with music by contemporary composers: Ola Gjeilo's *The Ground*, John Rutter's *For the Beauty of the Earth* and *A Gaelic Blessing*, and Allister MacGillivray's *Here is to Song*.

Soloists for this concert are Renfrew native Cameron Hunter, soprano; Hyung Song, bass; Carolyn Ho, violin and viola; and Eliana Kurilov de Castro, piano. All under the direction of Scott Auchinleck.

The host for this concert will be Don McLeish, and the performance will take place at St. Paul's Anglican Church, 20 Young Road in Kanata, at 7:30PM.



Photo by Eric Gartin

Tickets will be available at the door or by emailing <kanatachoralsociety@hotmail.com>. They are \$22 in advance and \$25 at the door for adults, \$20 for seniors, and \$10 for students 13 and up. Children under 13 are free. The price of the ticket includes the reception after the concert. For more details, visit <kanatachoralsociety.ca>.

Humm Bits

The Arrogant Worms Play Kanata!

The Arrogant Worms have spent over three decades making fun of a big dumb world. Their songs have been played on the radio, the internet, and in outer space (on the space shuttle Endeavour). On June 2 they will play closer to you — at Glen Cairn United Churn in Kanata!

The Worms began at Queen's University in 1991 when some members of the student cabaret group, The Queen's Players, started writing songs and sketches for the campus radio station. Soon the group became The Arrogant Worms (Chris Patterson, Mike McCormick, and Trevor Strong) who have since toured across Canada (and select other parts of the world), released 13 albums, and recorded with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. More than thirty years after they began, The Arrogant Worms continue to provide tuneful and silly escapism for everyone who needs it.

Tickets are \$35 plus fees at Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434), and the show starts at 7:30PM.

Carleton Place and District Community Band

The Carleton Place and District Community Band (CPDCB) will be kicking off its 2023 season with a spring concert entitled *Disney and Beyond*. The concert will take place at the Carambeck Community Centre on Sunday, June 4 at 2PM. Disney is this year's theme, and it is sure to bring back many fond memories for all. *Encanto*, *The Lion King* and *Aladdin* are some of the selections that will be performed. Admission is \$10, and children under 12 are free.

This summer the band will be presenting a series of free outdoor concerts at Riverside Park on Monday evenings. The concerts will take place at 7:30PM on June 19, July 10 and July 24. Come out on a summer evening and enjoy music in the park.

The CPDCB is open to musicians young and old. If you play an instrument now or if you were in a band years ago, come out and enjoy playing music again. There are no fees to join, and if you have two or three years of experience (or more) the CPDCB will be a great fit for you. Rehearsals take place on Monday evenings from 7:30-9PM at 137 John Street in Carleton Place. Please contact Mike Peckett at <mpeckett@sympatico.ca> for further information, or check <facebook.com/cpadcb> for details.

Blue Skies Adult Music Camp

Blue Skies in the Community presents an immersive music experience in the days leading up to the Blue Skies Festival. From Sunday, July 30 (evening) through Wednesday, August 2 (noon), they are offering three streams of workshops. The Bluegrass stream will be hosted by Joey Wright. Nicola Oddy is leading "Let's Sing" — sharing voices in the environment. Singing around the Campfire is under the guidance of Magoo — and evenings are spent doing just that. The Adult Music Camp takes place at the Blue Skies Festival site near Clarendon. Participants camp on-site. There are 20 places for each stream, so book early! The cost is \$200 and registration forms are available at <blueskies-in-the-community.ca>.

Around the Clock Home Care Services

Open spaces for new clients in Westport, Portland, Perth, Smith Falls and Carleton Place. TRAVELING IS NOT AN ISSUE!! I'm a female Personal Support Worker with over 25 years' experience offering personal care services and home support in dementia, Alzheimer's, palliative care, spinal cord injuries, both paraplegic and quadriplegic. Very familiar with lifts, feeding tube, suction, cathing, bathing, medication dispense, meal preparation, daily & weekly, housekeeping, errands, transportation to and from appointments. Foot care/nail in the comfort of your home. I'm also offering RESPITE daily, weekends or up to 3 weeks. If you need a break from your loved one. References, bonded and insured. Please call 613-328-9498 or email erikabogert75@outlook.com for more information. Private and Insurance Claims only. Sorry not Government funded.

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theHumm Interview

Creative Collaboration

An interview with Aaron Davis and Joey Wright

Joey Wright and Aaron Davis are two acclaimed musicians who have collaborated on numerous projects over the years. Their upcoming show at the MERA Schoolhouse with pedal steel phenomenon Michael Eckert promises to be an evening of captivating music that showcases their unique blend of folk, roots and jazz influences. theHumm caught up with Joey and Aaron to discuss their creative process, explore their musical backgrounds, and discover what audiences can expect from their upcoming performance.



by Rob Riendeau

theHumm: How did you two first meet, and what led you to start collaborating on music?

Aaron Davis: We actually met on the bandstand at the REX playing with Mike Eckert, a mutual musical friend in Neon Eagle, in 2019 (also known as the year before the world stood still).

Our conversation came round to building with wood, as it is wont to do, and we realized that we both liked to engage in this practice. In fact I had taken a wee course in cabinet-making from instrument-maker Oscar Graf at Algonquin college in Perth in 1973. When Joey told me that he lived in Elphin my eyebrows raised, as I had lived near McDonalds Corners for a couple of years in my late teens and early 20s and still had friends around there. I was taken with Joey's playing and compositions, and at the time had no idea he was also a singer! So we pledged that we would try to play a concert in Lanark County in spring of 2020. That sure didn't happen — in fact very little music was performed during that year — but we still would play together in Neon Eagle and finally we did some shows in spring of 2022. It was loads of fun!

Joey Wright: Yes that's right, we met at the REX. I remember you asking where I lived and I answered north of Kingston, and you said "where?" and I said Lanark County, and you said "where?" and I said Lanark Highlands, and you said "where?" and I said Elphin, and you said "oh I used to live there!"... and I said "we should play a show up there!"

Your music has been described as a fusion of different genres. How do you go about blending these influences in your songwriting and performance?

AD: Genres are not something I think about too much unless I'm trying to communicate something about music rather than playing or composing it. We are all eclectic, which means we can move effortlessly in a stylistic direction suggested by one of our bandmates if the spirit moves us.

JW: At this point in the musical journey I think all three of us would say that harmony and rhythm are the elements of any style or genre that enables us to communicate and interact in whatever type of song or instrumental composition we end up playing... Is that too nerdy? Nerd Alert!

The MERA schoolhouse is a unique and intimate venue. How do you adjust your performance style for smaller, more intimate spaces like this?

On May 27, catch Joey Wright (above) with Aaron Davis and Michael Eckert at the MERA Schoolhouse in McDonalds Corners

JW: MERA is great because it's like being on stage with the performers that you're there to see. The spectacle is the music and a room like that can really become part of the music with the atmosphere that it provides.

AD: The dynamics can be expanded into the pianissimo range with this band. Knowing that the audience can hear more of the harmonic structure of a tone, I might think about how chords are ringing out and at times seeing how quietly I can play.

Both of you have extensive experience as session musicians and have worked with many well-known artists. How does this experience inform your approach to creating your own music?

AD: This band gives us a chance to play our own material or popular tunes that are near and dear to us, since all three of us write. And we try to listen and react in a way that one would in a livingroom jam.

JW: Playing with so many artists over the years has definitely inspired and influenced me. Creating is an inborn human quality and I've been lucky in life to be exposed to a rich variety of creators who have all left a little bit with me — whether it's an approach, an attitude, an enthusiasm or a musical idea. I am more and more in search of the right attitude or frame of mind for creating something new, trying to distill myself back to my child mind.

What can audiences expect from your upcoming show at the MERA schoolhouse, and how do you hope they will connect with your music?

JW: There will be original instrumentals and songs from each of us. Stylistically, we'll be playing music that will sound like jazz at times and more like folk or country at times... drawing on the rich palate of American music and inputting our collective, personal style.

AD: We are playing and singing songs about our lives and the various twists and turns they have taken. And they have taken many turns. We hope you like it!

Tickets to the May 27 show are \$25 plus fees at Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434). The show starts at 7:30PM at the MERA Schoolhouse.

Second Annual
Indigenous Arts & Crafts Fair
Saturday, May 6
from 10-4PM
Zion-Memorial United Church
and the Carleton Place Library
Free admission
Donations to Art for Aid welcome
artforaidshop.ca

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ALMONTE & DISTRICT
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
PLANT SALE
Saturday, May 13
9AM to 11AM
Behind the Almonte
Public Library
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ANNUALS
HERBS
Please join us at our
monthly meeting —
May 22.
Guest speaker,
Jamie Roy of Acanthus
Flower Shop discusses
Succulents & cacti
Email for link:
aahsmallbox@gmail.com
www.gardenontario.org/site.php/almonte

Art in the Attic

Warm and Inviting in a Historic Intimate Setting

By Laurel Cook

Welcome to the 33rd annual Art in the Attic (AITA) event, being held on Mother's Day weekend — Saturday, May 13 (10AM to 5PM) and Sunday, May 14 (10AM to 4PM) at the Almonte Old Town Hall, located at 14 Bridge Street.

Over the last thirty years or so, AITA has showcased the wonderful works of local artists. In the open, airy and spacious auditorium you can view the best works of contemporary artists in a large variety of media, styles and subjects. You will find painting, photography, leatherwork, pottery, textile art, paper art, fused glass, mosaics, jewellery and more. There is a wide range of price points, yet the quality and originality of the presented works has held fast for over three decades. It is really a "something for everyone" show.

Other than the first two years, the show has been held in the historic Almonte Old Town Hall. Dating back to 1885, this building is now declared a heritage site.

Walking up from the main entrance to the auditorium, let your hand trail along the smooth and worn banister that has guided generations of visitors. As you enter through the door you are struck by the soaring ceiling of hand-hewn Douglas Fir beams whose acoustics make this famous auditorium one of Canada's best performance spaces.

The auditorium is named after volunteer Ron Caron, who helped lovingly restore it over many years into a state-of-the-art facility. The deep red theatre curtains, the golden wood floors, the spiral stairwell and arched windows at the back of the room all contribute to the venue, which is a piece of art in itself. Ron also designed and helped build the classic



See works by many local artists (including Linda Hamilton's beautiful paper flowers, above) at Art in the Attic over Mother's Day weekend

art display boards and the full overhead lighting tracks that highlight and enhance the art exhibits. It is truly a traditional and beautiful setup.

In this warm and welcoming space, the artists cannot help but be approachable and enjoy engaging with the public. We look forward to meeting you! Find details at <almonteartintheattic.wordpress.com> or at <facebook.com/AlmonteArtintheAttic>.

From Experience to Page

Unlocking the Power of Personal Writing Retreat

Have you ever thought about writing your own story? Sitting down to really honour the life you've led, the places you've seen, the people you've loved? Now is the time to give it a try! Stone Manor Studios is excited to announce the first-ever writing workshop on the grounds of an 1860 stone manor estate in Newboro, Ontario, in the heart of Rideau Lakes. A place to commune, to reflect, and to really unlock your most precious memories in a warm space with like-minded writers.

Stone Manor is thrilled to welcome celebrated memoirist and essayist Jen McGuire as their featured author. For the past 20 years, Jen has been writing personal essays for publications like *Good Housekeeping*, *The Globe and Mail*, *O Magazine* and more. She was shortlisted for the 2010 Stephen Leacock Humour Award and her first memoir, *Nest*, has sold thousands of copies in Canada and the U.S.

The workshop takes place over two days, in which Jen will guide writers of all levels through exercises

to help them reconnect with their own story, and perhaps even more importantly, reconnect with all the people they have been in different stages of their lives. She will share her insights, offer feedback on your writing, and provide tips and tricks on how to write your own story. This workshop is a judgment-free zone, so bring your best stories and know that you are in a safe space to share.

This exclusive writing workshop weekend is an experience you won't want to miss. It is an excellent opportunity for anyone who wants to explore the world of writing, learn from an experienced writer, and connect with other aspiring writers. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced writer, this workshop will help you tap into your creative potential and start writing your own story.

Please visit <stonemanorstudios.ca> for details, accommodation ideas, and to register.

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The Carleton Place Town Singers present

A JOYFUL SPRING

7 PM
Sunday, May 28 & Tuesday, May 30

DIRECTOR LAUREL TYE ACCOMPANIST TONY STUART

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Doors open at 6:30 PM

THE TOWN SINGERS

TICKETS \$15.00
Children 12 and under enter free from ticketsplease.ca

Also available from
The Granary 107 Bridge Street, CP
Choir Members, and at the door (cash only)

Mill Street Books

May Literary Events

Sunday May 28, 1PM
Almonte Old Town Hall
A Conversation with David Johnston, Canada's 28th Governor General
In celebration of his most personal book to date *Empathy: Turning Compassion into Action*.

Hosted by Mill Street Books, in collaboration with The Friends of Mississippi Mills Public Library, this event is free but registration is required at www.missmillslibrary.com. Books and refreshments will be available for purchase.

Tuesday May 30, 6:30PM
Mississippi Mills Library, Almonte Branch
The Hidden Kingdom of Fungi
Mycologist Keith Seifert will discuss the importance of fungi — in our forests, homes and bodies. He will also offer observation tips for this spring, focussing on local surroundings and the Mill of Kintail.
Free event with registration. Books available for purchase.

Mississippi Mills Public Library

52 Mill St., Almonte 613-256-9090
millstreetbooks@gmail.com
millstreetbooks.com

BLUES ON THE RIDEAU

THE COVE INN - WESTPORT ONTARIO

DAVID ROTUNDO BAND

May 12 & 13 - FULL BAND 7-11 pm
DINNER & SHOW \$100+HST

May 13 - ACOUSTIC LUNCH DUO 12-2 pm
DAVID ROTUNDO & SEAMUS COWAN
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More info at www.BluesOnTheRideau.ca

BLUES ON THE RIDEAU

THE COVE INN - WESTPORT ONTARIO

BLACKBURN BROTHERS

June 2 7-11 pm
DINNER & SHOW FUNDRAISER \$100+HST
PROCEEDS TO THE RIDEAU DISTRICT MUSEUM
ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
613-273-3636

More info at www.BluesOnTheRideau.ca

Farmers' Markets: Open for the Season!

As you walk away from the farmers' market with your canvas bags filled with fresh local produce, plants, organic meats and assorted other delicious goodies, you just can't help feeling good. Supporting small-scale market farms means voting with your dollars for the option that is easier on the planet than large, mono-crop industrial farms. Having to plan the trip to the market means planning meals, which is a great way to reduce both wasted food and extra trips to the grocery store. Growers at the market are proud of what they sell, and their primary goal is to produce food that tastes great and is full of nutrients, instead of stuff that needs to survive a trip across an ocean and most of a country in a shipping container.

For those reasons and many more, we put out a call to all of the Farmers' Markets in our catchment area. Here's what they have to say about the start of the season!

Carleton Place

Everyone is invited to the Carleton Place Farmers' Market — at the Market Square on the corner of Lake Avenue and Beckwith Street — each Saturday morning from 8:30AM to 12:30PM, beginning in mid-May and running until mid-October. Besides purchasing fresh seasonal produce, baked goods (with gluten-free options), prepared meals and homemade crafts for yourself or as gifts, you can feel good about supporting local growers and producers. Come on out and cultivate a relationship with your local producers! Supporting the Carleton Place Farmers' Market will make you part of a special place that is creating community. For more information and special events, visit us on Facebook or Instagram, or check out <cpfarmersmarket.wordpress.com>

Perth

Located on the Tay Basin outside the Crystal Palace, the market is open Saturdays — rain or shine — from 8AM to 1PM, from May 13 right through to Thanksgiving weekend. The Perth Market has numerous vendors selling amazingly fresh produce, local meats, preserves, ready-to-eat food, honey and syrup, as well as handmade crafts of all kinds.

Live music, a waterside café, kids' crafts and activities are available throughout the season. For detailed information, visit the market's website at <perthfarmersmarket.ca> or like them on Facebook and Instagram for updates!

Almonte

Everyone from the Almonte Farmers' Market would first like to thank the community for their support in ensuring that the market remains a fixture in Almonte's downtown! Opening day this season is Saturday, May 20. Please note — this year you will find them on the Alameda, next to the Almonte library parking lot, from 8:30AM to 12:30PM every Saturday.

This handy little market offers hot breakfast and lunch, all kinds of baking, organically grown produce, pork, beef and lamb, plus Back 40 sheep's cheese, fresh flowers, preserves, maple syrup and honey. They have an array of locally made crafts, as well as products to care for body and soul. Bring your dull knives, tools and scissors down to get expertly sharpened while you shop. And every third Saturday of the month is the famous basket draw! There is lots to offer at the Almonte Farmers' Market, so why not make shopping there part of your Saturday morning routine. For more information, please visit <almontefarmersmarket.com>.

Carp

The Carp Farmers' Market takes place on Saturdays from 8AM to 1PM at the Carp Fairgrounds (3790 Carp Road). The 2023 season runs from the beginning of May to the end of October. Complementing the primary produce and meat producers, the market also features bakers and other prepared-food vendors, as well as a range of hand-made craft products of the highest quality. The Carp Farmers' Market is proud to be a producer-only market, which means that all the vendors make, bake or grow what they sell! All of them also live within 100km of Carp — it doesn't get much more local than that! Visit <carpfarmersmarket.ca> for details.



Perth Farmers' Market
Opening May 13, inside & outside the Crystal Palace
Saturdays 8AM–1PM
perthfarmersmarket.ca



CARLETON PLACE,
Farmers' Market
WE MAKE...WE BAKE...WE GROW



Each Saturday from 8:30AM–12:30PM
beginning mid May until Mid October
at the corner of Lake Ave. & Beckwith St.

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SPECIALTY ITEMS, MEATS, JAMS, JELLIES, HONEY,
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Facebook, Instagram, or check out cpfarmersmarket.wordpress.com

ALMONTE FARMERS MARKET
visit almontefarmersmarket.com

OPENS MAY 20

SATURDAYS
from 8:30 AM
to 12:30 PM

NEW LOCATION: ALMONTE ALAMEDA

Gardening and the Environment

Often, when driving our beautiful rural roads, my view is offended by cups and fast-food wrappers discarded at the side of the road, or even garbage bags and unwanted furniture. *Who would do this?* In my humble opinion, whoever has done this is not a gardener. In my view, anyone who has a solid connection with the soil and with growing things does not spread their garbage all over the landscape.

by David Hinks

We are warned that an environmental apocalypse is upon us. We are exhorted to change our lifestyle and reduce our carbon footprint, noting that the rate at which we are gobbling up the earth's resources requires the equivalent of 1.4 earths (other sources estimate 1.6) — clearly not sustainable in the longer term!



This month, David Hinks connects the dots from gardening to supporting local Farmers' Markets

Can gardeners help stop this runaway train? It is easy to feel powerless and that our efforts are futile — the only solution I have come up with is to focus on our own very local lifestyle.

I find it fascinating to peruse gardening books and manuals from a generation or two ago. The relationship with nature was much more adversarial, particularly with respect to weeds and insects.

When I first started serious gardening, the "holy grail" of preparation of a new garden was "double-digging". The soil from the first trench of soil was set aside and a second depth of soil was dug and cleaned of all roots and so on across the new garden. I tried it a few times and wow, it was a lot of work! Currently the emphasis is on low-till or no-till as we try to avoid compacting the soil and disturbing the complex web of life in the soil.

Many gardeners try various forms of "lasagna gardening", where layers of cardboard are laid over existing sod and then truckloads of new soil are brought in. When developing a new garden, my strategy is to absolutely minimize the amount of material that needs to be trucked on or off the site. Certainly, raised boxes become a necessity for those with limited mobility.

I have been able to create a berm in the garden with logs, branches and other organic matter. It can be a great spot for planting fruiting shrubs.

The reality of a small garden is that the soil will become depleted of nutrients over time as we harvest our crops. Various strategies can reduce the amounts of manure or compost that we need to truck into our garden. Gardeners can become very adept at scrounging every bit of organic material, for example those bags of leaves at the end of your neighbour's driveway. Cover crops and green crops help build organic material as they are worked into the soil. Rotating crops also helps, as different plants have quite different nutrient requirements.

The current mantra is to leave decaying plant material in the garden until prepping the garden for planting in the spring to protect habitat for over-wintering insects. We have learned that over 90 percent of insects are beneficial and that we need to encourage pollinators and insects that parasitize some of the "bad" insects in our garden.

Some clues as to how to make gardening more sustainable may be found in the principles of permaculture, defined as "a system of agricultural and social design principles centered on simulating or directly utilizing the patterns and features observed in natural ecosystems."

Even if you are not willing or able to rip up your own yard or that of your neighbour, your food purchasing choices can make an environmental difference. Purchasing from local producers reduces the amount of fossil fuels that are used to transport our food.

I am especially grateful to those market gardeners who are trying to make a living on small acreages and

are marketing their produce to local stores and restaurants, who are selling Community Supported Agriculture shares and at local markets.

I try to support these plucky entrepreneurs by buying locally as much as possible, generally at Farmers' Markets during the growing season. We are very lucky to have several markets close at hand. Which one is your favourite? I am hard pressed to pick one, although Carp certainly has an enviable status in the world of Farmers' Markets, being held up as a model for local-producer-controlled markets.

More than 200 years ago, in 1780, Kingston became home to the first Farmers' Market in Ontario — there are now 180 across the province.

I like to think of the relationship between gardening and the environment in the broadest terms in the sense that folks who garden have a holistic approach to life. They not only nurture tender growing plants — they often have an approach to life that includes environmental, economic and social sustainability.

For those who want to help the community and learn much more about vegetable gardening, might I suggest volunteering at the garden created by the Lanark Food Bank in Blakeney. This two-acre garden

is beginning its third year in May. In the first two years, 30,000 pounds of fresh organic produce was grown for Food Bank clients. Volunteers are asked to commit to a weekly 3-hour shift throughout the growing season. Experienced gardeners lead the work in a gorgeous rural setting. For more information, please contact Food Bank manager Tammy Parent at <lcfb.thehungerstop@gmail.com>.



Calling All Gardeners

The Almonte and District Horticultural Society will be holding their annual spring plant sale on Saturday, May 13 from 9–11AM at the back of the Almonte library.

Please note: there will be no early sales or reserving of plants before 9AM. Payment can be made by cash or cheque. Horticultural Society memberships will be available at the sale.

There will be lots of annual flowers and vegetables as well as a good selection of perennial plants. Bulbs such as Canna lilies will be on offer, along with gently used tools, books and more.

The members are always happy to share their knowledge to be sure that your new plants will be a success in your garden and to answer any other gardening questions you may have.

Mark your calendar — they hope to see you there!

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Taste of the County Returns!

Delicious Fundraiser for Therapeutic Riding

By Amy Booth

The ConnectWell Therapeutic Riding Program would like to invite you to our Re-Boot of the **Taste of the County: Tasting Gala** on Monday, June 5 at the beautiful Stonefields Estate in Beckwith. Come out with your friends to celebrate spring and treat yourself to a delicious evening for a really great cause.

In addition to tasting some exceptional local cuisine, local beer and great wine, this event boasts one of the largest silent auctions in the county, featuring over 125 fabulous items such as artwork, gift certificates, wine, tools, horse paraphernalia, household items, collectables and other great loot — all up for grabs that evening.

The 2023 *Taste of the County* will once again be hosted in Stonefields' elegant event barn with its beautiful outdoor terrace. Stonefields is an award-winning wedding venue located at 1985 9th Line in Beckwith. The historic estate features acres of rolling farmland and is a breathtaking setting for our Food and Wine Gala.

Our last Gala happened in 2019, and due to Covid we have not been able to host another until now. As all our funds are raised through grants, donations and fundraising activities like this one, we really hope you will consider joining us — and supporting our incredible riders. In addition to the \$25 entry fee, gala goers will purchase \$1 coupons and each vendor will price their tasters so that you have the opportunity to sample many different appetizers, main courses, desserts, beer and wine.

The Therapeutic Riding Program is celebrating 38 years of providing therapeutic riding lessons, right here in Lanark County. All the money raised at this event goes right back into the program. Come and share a toast with us at this wonderful event.



On June 5, you can sample delicious local fare while raising much needed funds for the Therapeutic Riding Program, at the re-boot of the "Taste of the County" Tasting Gala!

Taste of the County runs from 6–9PM on Monday, June 5. Tickets are \$25, available at Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485–6434), on the ConnectWell website <connectwell.ca> or by contacting us through <facebook.com/connectwellch>.

“The Seven Gifts”

What is All This About Anyway?

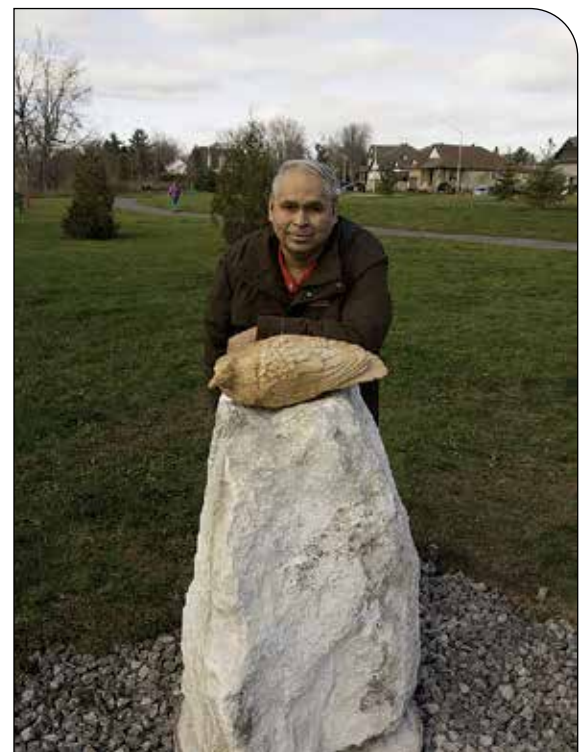
If you were to take a walk along Riverfront Park in Almonte, you would see seven marble stones standing upright in a twenty-five-foot circle — a sort of mini-Stonehenge, some have said. Where did it come from? Why is it there? Who put it there? And who is paying for it?

If you haven't noticed the posters around town, you won't know that you can find out all about an exciting Truth and Reconciliation project on the evening of Thursday, May 4 at the Old Town Hall. The doors will open at 6:30 with smudging. An Indigenous-led opening ceremony will begin at 7PM, followed by presentations with photos by Elder Larry McDermott (an environmentalist Algonquin member of the Shabot Obaadijwan First Nation) and the artists. The event will also be livestreamed for those unable to attend in person.

Tickets are \$15 to help cover costs and can be obtained here through Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca or 485–6434). ASL interpretation will be available.

A couple of hints: When completed, this will be an artistic and educational celebration of the spiritual and cultural life of the original inhabitants of this land, the Algonquin Anishinaabe people. What a great way for the Mississippi Mills community to mark our two hundredth anniversary!

— Submitted by Lanark County Neighbours for Truth and Reconciliation



Wood carver Nish Nabie shows where his raven carving, once copied in bronze, will be attached to one of the rocks

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10th Anniversary AGH Run/Walk for Women's Health

Walkers and runners of all ages and abilities are invited to participate in the 10th anniversary AGH Run/Walk for Women's Health <aghvmf.givecloud.co>, sponsored by Canadian Tire (Carleton Place), on Saturday, June 10. The morning will feature fun warm-up activities, children's entertainment and games, pre- and post-run/walk food and refreshments. Incredible prizes will be awarded for the top fundraising individuals, families and teams. Eight Shania Twain tickets, an outdoor pizza oven, a home theatre projector, a kayak, Puppets Up activity and Carp Fair passes are just some of the incentives that will be awarded to this year's most successful pledge collectors. Everything gets underway at 8AM behind the Hospital and Manor.

Participants can choose from one of three distances: a 3k Family Fun (untimed walk or run), a 3k Walk or Run (timed), a 5k Walk or Run (timed), or a 10k Walk or Run (timed).

Registration is \$50 for an individual or \$150 for a Family or Team (any combination of six people). Additional Family or Team members are \$50 per person.

Registration fees offset the costs of staging the event. Pledges drive the success of the annual fundraiser. As a result, all participants are encouraged to collect or donate a minimum of \$50. Fundraising is made easy through the new registration site. Once registered, participants can set up an individual,

family or team page and share it through email or social media. All donations collected are eligible for a charitable tax receipt.

"We've got some really amazing prizes as part of our 10th anniversary celebration, including Shania Twain tickets that were donated," says Al Roberts, Managing Director of the AGH FVM Foundation. "When participants collect pledges, that's when our patients are the big winners."

For every \$50 collected in pledges, participants will receive a ballot for a draw to win two tickets to the Shania Twain concert taking place on July 6 at Ottawa Bluesfest. The more fundraising participants do, the more chances they have to win prizes.

Since its inception, participants, donors, partners and volunteers have raised more than \$250,000, which has allowed the Hospital to fund priority clinical equipment for the birthing unit and women's health care. Serving families from all over the region, approximately 400 babies are born at AGH each year.

Everyone who pays to register will receive an AGH Run for Women's Health runner's fanny pack and an event kit (both will be available for pick-up from the Octagon Room at 95 Spring Street on Friday, June 9 from 2-7PM).

Visit <aghvmf.givecloud.co> and follow 2023 AGH Run progress @AGHRUN.

Donate to the Library Auction!

By Pam Harris

Preparations for the "Fun, Food, & Favourites" online auction by the Friends of the Mississippi Mills Public Library are well underway. The Friends have been busy gathering donated services, gift cards and experiences from organizations, businesses and individuals in the community. The response has been wonderful; however, we do more donations, especially from individuals. We are getting some new and creative entries. One we are working on among the Friends is to have a group of bakers make a dozen

Christmas cookies each, pool them together as an auction item, with the winning bidder picking up the basket of freshly baked cookies in December, just in time for Christmas. Who wouldn't want that? Let's get creative! If you are able to make a donation, please contact auction committee member Pam Harris at <friends@missmillslibrary.com>.

We are getting together an online registration form at 32auctions for all donations and expect to have that in action soon. And then the fun begins! We will post the donations on the auction site and, as of May 10, we will release the auction link and you will be able to visit the site and view the entries as they come in. It is a great opportunity to plan your bidding strategy while you wait for the bidding to start on June 5.

Our auction goal this year is \$5000, which will allow the library to fund its current level of programming and perhaps plan some new programs too. Let's see if we can hit the goal and allow the library to dream of new and valuable programs in both the Almonte and the Pakenham branches. Want to donate? Email <friends@missmillslibrary.com>.



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theHumm Interview

Health & Wellness Fair

Bridging Generations — Age Friendly Pakenham is a volunteer run, community-based organization that works to identify issues and find solutions that impact the older community of Pakenham. Back in 2015, they started identifying issues that addressed the question “what will I need to stay in Pakenham as I age?”, and held three community forums to help determine the answers. Based on feedback from those forums, they “created a dynamic work plan that we have worked through with great results, no funding, and a team of dedicated

by Kris Riendeau

volunteers and community partners”. However, Covid resulted in setbacks to the plan, as well as increased rates of social isolation among seniors. Now that we are emerging from the pandemic, and with Pakenham celebrating its 200th anniversary in 2023, Bridging Generations is planning a Health & Wellness Fair on June 1 with the themes of “Renew, Rediscover and Reimagine”. theHumm reached out to Sherryl Smith, one of the organizers of this event, to find out more.

theHumm: In addition to being a senior in Pakenham yourself, I understand that you have an extensive background in public health. Can you tell me a bit about that, and how it led you to become involved in Bridging Generations?

Sherryl Smith: Moving to a rural community gave me a different perspective on the health system. I have always been a community developer in my role as a health promoter in various types of primary care settings. I engaged in many health-related community organizations in Lanark County since moving here in 1995, including being a member of the Pakenham Home and Community Services Board, Arnprior Hospital Board, Champlain Community Care Access Board, and most recently Lanark Leeds and Grenville Health Unit Board. These governance experiences revealed to me the difficulties rural communities face in accessing services, and also educated me on the ability of rural communities to look after their own. The equity of service delivery had become a prime concern for me.

I was approached by Jeff Mills of The Mills (now Carebridge) in 2016 to put a proposal together to conduct a needs assessment in Pakenham related to Age Friendly approaches. We called the effort Bridging Generations because we wanted to see how we could create a community of caring across generations. Out of that process, a small group formed and has carried on addressing many issues that have benefited the entire community.

In your opinion, what are some of the main obstacles to aging-in-place in small communities like Pakenham?

Access to the same level of services that urban residents receive appears to be a major issue, and it mostly revolves around transportation — for service providers trying to provide home care to rural residents, for people getting to medical appointments in the city, and for having the ability and freedom to come and go at will. Once an older person is unable to drive their own vehicle, they are totally dependent on others to access the services they need. This can be life changing. Most older people — 80% or more — want to stay in their own home and community where they have friends, family and social connections.

If you had a magic wand, what three things would you do to improve the quality of life for seniors living in small communities?

Affordable accessible transportation, effective communication and information, and coordinated home care and community support.

Why has the group chosen the themes of “Renew, Rediscover and Reimagine” for the upcoming Health & Wellness Fair?

We met in September of 2022 after three years of little contact with the community, and realized we needed to find out how people were doing, who was involved in their care, and what we would need to do to answer our original question: “what will it take for us to age in place in Pakenham?” It was time to *renew* connections and friendships, to *rediscover* the many assets Pakenham has to offer, and to *reimagine* the future. We know lots has changed in the health system, there is a new awareness about health issues, and that the system is extremely difficult to understand



Health promoter Sherryl Smith talks to theHumm about the upcoming Health & Wellness Fair being organized by Age Friendly Pakenham on June 1.

It's a chance to “Renew, Rediscover and Reimagine” what people need to stay in small towns as they age.

and navigate. We decided to bring people out of their isolation by offering information and education as well as a social outing.

Are other organizations partnering with you, either over the long run or specifically for this Fair? What expertise and opportunities do they bring to your dedicated group of volunteers?

We have many partners involved in making this happen. From our lead partner the Municipality of Mississippi Mills, we received a community grant that has made it possible. We have been working for years with the Mississippi Mills Library, Home Hospice North Lanark, The Pakenham Civitan Club, Pakenham Public School, as well as the Lanark Leeds and Grenville Public Health Unit and Ontario Health Team. All these partners have played leadership roles in making this happen, both in the past by facilitating and enabling our accomplishments in Pakenham, and now for the Fair. Come out to learn what they do to make this a healthy community!

What kinds of displays, information and activities can people expect to find at the Fair? Are you hoping to attract primarily seniors, or folks of all ages?

The Fair (much like the Seniors Expo pre-pandemic) will offer a wide array of exhibitions — some about health and wellness services, but also related to the other aspects of Age Friendly Communities such as transportation, housing, information, social participation, etc.

As part of the Bicentennial celebrations, we will have displays about the history of healthcare in Pakenham. Local school classes are participating in researching and presenting some of these displays.

The Tech Tables will provide an exciting hands-on look at the future of healthcare. People will be able to see and try logging onto health care portals, learn how to access their lab results, make appointments, etc. Tech tutors of all ages will be available to help and encourage people to embrace this future reality.

Several mini-workshops will be provided by the OPP and the RBC Bank to educate people about cyber risks and scams.

The canteen will be available for refreshments and places to interact with neighbours. The event is open to the public from 10AM to 3PM, and we hope that all ages will participate, even though the target audience is older adults and seniors.

What does it mean to Pakenham to be registered as an Age Friendly Community with the Ontario Age Friendly Communities Network?

The OAFN Network in Ontario provides lots of resources and supports for community groups and municipalities who want to become Age Friendly Communities. They offer workshops and webinars, and share research findings on a regular basis. We are planning to have a display on the Age Friendly approach, and we encourage other communities and municipalities to come to see it and talk with us about how it has worked in Pakenham.

Housing for Healthy Communities

These days, there is a lot in the news about the need for more housing for growing populations, both urban and rural, even here in Lanark. Looking around, it's interesting to see so much great work happening all over the world on developing thriving communities and creating neighbourhoods where innovative, green ideas are in full swing.

But back to Lanark County: our challenge is to meet the need for new smart homes that address our Rural/Urban demographic that is predicted to grow substantially in the coming decades.

by Chandler Swain

I recently watched an episode of TVO's *The Agenda* with Steve Pakin. It featured a discussion with two Ontario town planners on how they are approaching the reality of burgeoning population growth in their mainly rural municipalities. One of the people interviewed was the planner from Tay Valley, Noelle Reeve. Her understanding of the complexity of the issues and what we are facing in our primarily rural county was so inspiring. I asked Noelle if she could outline how she would ideally see the growth issue dealt with locally, and why.



Tay Valley planner Noelle Reeve shares some good news and progressive ideas about housing

What Noelle Reeve Has to Say

"When thinking about designing community, I believe it is important to consider your goals. Mine include protecting the environment, ensuring social connection, and supporting wellbeing. Randall Arendt's book *Conservation Design for Subdivisions* aimed to undo the inefficient land consumption associated with conventional subdivision design and replace it

with designs that set aside half the site for nature. His updated edition of *Rural By Design* maintains the focus on natural protection and adds in important community components for residents such as stores, libraries, schools, etc.

Density can be a scary word, but it doesn't have to mean apartment towers. Density in a rural setting provides opportunities for what land use planners now call "Complete Communities," but were called villages in the past. Complete Communities are able to meet the day-to-day needs of people throughout all stages of their life.

This type of community is also known as the 15-minute community. You live in a 15-minute community if you can get to a café, a grocery store, a park and a library in just a 15-minute walk from your home. StrongTowns.org is a big proponent of this type of community because the density needed to maintain it is financially viable as well as producing a thriving place to live.

Social connection can be encouraged in "third places". In community planning, the term third place refers to places where people spend time between home (first place) and work (second place). They are locations where we exchange ideas, have a good time and build relationships. So think of coffee shops, libraries, pocket parks, etc. where economic class gets levelled out.

When looking for a community design that supports wellbeing, I believe you have to consider reducing climate disruption. For many years the Drake Landing subdivision built in Okotoks, Alberta was seen almost as a utopia by land use planners. As the first solar subdivision in North America, it reduced GHGs and water consumption, and saved residents money on heating and cooling costs.

Now Ontario is catching up, and according to the Canadian Homebuilders Association has a number of developments that have been built to be net zero or net zero ready, including ones in Westport and Ottawa. Municipalities can adopt Green Development Standards to require or encourage energy efficient buildings and green infrastructure and design in development projects in their communities.

Wellbeing also includes upholding the dignity of people and ensuring all members of a community can shape and participate in the community. The "8 to 80" movement has been guided by the idea that if everything we do in our communities is great for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old, then it will be better for all people.

The province has funding available to create Age Friendly community plans which, in planning for physical accessibility and safe spaces, in fact benefit more than elderly community members (for example, parents struggling with strollers, people with physical disabilities, women at night, etc.).

Age Friendly community planning offers an additional key benefit for the wellbeing of communities — planning for inclusion. While we plan to include those over 65 in community events and meetings, we can make sure we are including Indigenous, new-comer, LGBTQ+ members of the community also.

All of the above ideas and groups provide examples of how to create communities that can manage growth to make residents' lives better. One final piece of good news is that the Federal government is back in the business of funding non-profit co-op housing. Co-op housing includes slightly below-market and subsidized housing built in the same development.

Residents are equal members of the co-op and make decisions jointly. Co-op housing is a means of achieving housing as a right. I hope Lanark County and local municipalities will take advantage of the federal funding to build affordable homes. For more information, contact The Table Community Food Centre <thetablecf.org>."

Next Steps

If your interest has been piqued by Noelle's words, more information can be found via this link to Natural Resources Canada: <natural-resources.Canada.ca>. You'll find details on the Canada Greener Homes Initiative and all the information on the how and why of using cold climate heat pumps that work down to -30 degrees Celsius.

Climate Network Lanark is developing a local program to help residents connect with neighbours and local tradespeople so they can make the best decisions to get their own homes off fossil fuels. You'll find plenty of information at <climatenetworklanark.ca> that will help direct you to great resources on energy, housing and much more.

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Camp Quality Seeks Volunteers

Make a Difference at a Camp for Children Affected by Cancer and Blood Disorders

Camp Quality is a volunteer-driven national charitable organization that provides free camp experiences for children affected by cancer and blood disorders. Camp Quality Eastern Ontario has been operating a camp for kids with cancer since 2000, and will be running from August 20 to 26 this year. They are looking to fill twenty volunteer positions on their team. Volunteers will help host an incredible camp experience for kids affected by cancer at their campsite in Lanark, Ontario.

They are seeking volunteers who are dedicated, engaged, enjoy working with children and spending time outdoors, and are ready to have fun! Camp Quality has a variety of volunteer roles including Lifeguards, Super Companions and Companions. Companions are the 1:1 volunteers (camp counsellors) who are paired with a camper to help encourage them to try camp activities, and help support them throughout the week. Super Companions assist with a variety of tasks such as helping to run activities, set-up and take-down, and providing breaks to the Companions. This is a neat role because you get to experience lots of different activities and interact with many campers throughout the week.

Volunteering at Camp Quality is a truly life-changing experience. Those who enter the gates and gather around the campfire are in for a week of pure magic. As a volunteer, you make a huge difference in a child's life by supporting them as they step out of their comfort zone to try new things, encourage them to make new friends and help them to develop new skills — all while making memories and having fun in a safe and welcoming environment. On the flipside of things, as a vol-

unteer you're also making a huge difference in your own life! By volunteering at camp you are building your résumé with new leadership skills, getting back to nature, making friendships and networking with other volunteers, all while impacting the future of Camp Quality.

Natalie Downing is a long-time volunteer who now serves as National Volunteer Coordinator for Camp Quality. Natalie began by committing a week each summer to ensure that Camp Quality was able to run programs for roughly 40 campers, free of charge. She loved it so much that she joined their year-round team and now supports recruitment, screening, training and on-site coaching. She says: "volunteering is just as fun as it is rewarding — one week of camp fills my bucket for the whole year". Natalie and the team are so excited to return this summer to support campers as they swim, create masterpieces at arts and crafts, and of course sing their hearts out. Providing the "best summer ever for kids with cancer and blood disorders" is their goal, but they need your help.

For more information about Camp Quality volunteering, camp programs, introducing new



Volunteer for Camp Quality and have a fun and meaningful summer experience!

campers and their families or donating, head to campquality.org. To submit a volunteer application, visit campquality.org/register. For questions about camp or volunteer applications, please contact Natalie Downing, Volunteer Coordinator, at info@campquality.org.

Come experience the magic of Camp Quality Eastern Ontario — it just may be the best week of your summer!

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Becoming Unshakeable

By Margaret Dennis

Summer is a time of adventure, exploration and personal growth. For teenage girls, it's also an opportunity to discover their strengths, build self-esteem and become confident, empowered young women. That's why we have founded and launched **Unshakeable ME**, a weeklong summer camp that is designed for teenage girls, with a focus on building self-esteem, self-worth, self-confidence, and learning how to be the best version of themselves. This unique and transformative experience will provide girls with the tools and support they need to become unshakeable young women.

Any woman who has lived through their teenage years knows how hard it can be to navigate the pressures and expectations of adolescence and survive this time unscathed. Now more than ever, our girls need a place where they can come together, be heard and make real connections — with others as well as themselves. Our camp is about personal growth and about having fun, making new friends, creating memories that will last a lifetime, and discovering the unique qualities that make each girl special.

At Unshakeable ME, girls will participate in a wide range of activities and workshops. From team-building exercises to creative arts and crafts, girls will discover new talents, skills and interests that they never knew they had. They will also learn how to communicate effectively, set boundaries and navigate the challenges of adolescence with grace and resilience.



Lea Moffatt (above) and Margaret Dennis (at left) are offering a camp for teenage girls this summer in Almonte and Oshawa

Our mission is to inspire teenage girls to know their worth, make friends with their emotions and create tools to support themselves as they grow so that they can feel empowered to show up confidently as their unshakeable selves. Our vision is empowering teenage girls to take on the world.

Who are we? We are Margaret Dennis, Women's Life Empowerment Coach, and Lea Moffatt, Creative Empowerment Leader & Coach. We are passionate advocates for teenage girls, both being moms to teen girls ourselves. We believe that every girl is worth it and is amazing just as she is, and we are committed to providing girls with the tools and support they need to achieve their full potential so that they can be confident being their authentic selves.

Unshakeable ME camp will be held at the Cedar Hill School House near Almonte from July 17–21. A second camp will be held in Oshawa from August 14–18. Spaces are limited.

We would love to have you join us! To learn more about Unshakeable ME and to register, please visit our website at unshakeable-me.com.



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Three Shows at Sivarulrasa Gallery

Almonte's Sivarulrasa Gallery will present three new exhibitions beginning in May. *Sue Adams: Early Works 1991–1998* will run in Gallery II from May 12 to June 23. This exhibition delves into a pivotal early period in Almonte-based artist Sue Adams' trajectory as a sculptor. Four works created by the artist between 1991 and 1998 will be featured: two figurative works of sculpture and two works that use plexiglass and found objects. Sue Adams studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Nice, France in 1973 and completed her BFA at the University of Windsor in 1976. Over the past four decades, her work has been exhibited in many group and solo exhibitions in Canada, including in Ottawa, Toronto, and Montreal, and in the United States and France. Special feature: there will be a Studio Tour & Guided Talk by Sue Adams on Sunday June 11, from 2–4PM — registration is required for this tour, so please email <info@sivarulrasa.com> to register.

Sarah Anderson: In Hope but in Doubt will run May 12 to June 23 in Gallery III. The title of the show comes from the song *Then Again* by the band Half Moon Run. Sarah Anderson sees colour as a powerful tool for the expression of emotion. Her paintings are deeply influenced by personal experiences, most commonly by themes of family and challenges attributed to reconciling relationships. She earned her Bachelor

of Fine Arts degree from the University of Ottawa in 2002. Her studio practice is based at the Enriched Bread Artists (EBA) studios in Ottawa. Special feature: the artist will provide a live demonstration of her painting technique at Sivarulrasa Gallery — stay tuned at <sivarulrasa.com> for more information!

Deborah Arnold & Mary Pfaff: Nexus, a duo exhibition inspired by the theme of stones, will run in Gallery I from May 19 to June 30. This exhibition features stone sculpture by Almonte sculptor Deborah Arnold and stone-inspired paintings by Almonte artist Mary Pfaff. The title of the show "Nexus" references a connection or link between things, persons or events. Deborah Arnold has been sculpting stone for over three decades. In 2022, Canada's Official Residences Crown Collection acquired her work *Purple Fire*, to be installed at Rideau Hall. Mary Pfaff earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts (with distinction) from the University of Ottawa in 1990. Her nonrepresentational paintings and drawings have an atmospheric, lyrical quality, evocative of themes in nature and her personal life.

Meet artists Sue Adams, Sarah Anderson, Deborah Arnold and Mary Pfaff at the combined Artist Reception for these three shows on Saturday, May 27 from 2–4PM. Registration is not required; the gallery is open to the public. For more information, visit <sivarulrasa.com>.



Sacred and Profane (detail above) will be featured in *Sue Adams: Early Works 1991–1998* at Sivarulrasa Gallery

Woven Woods & Knit Markers

Two new exhibits will be on display at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum (MVTM) from April 29 to July 22. *Woven Woods: A Journey Through the Forest Floor* is a collection of 12 round fabric wall hangings. Artist Lorraine Roy has used various fabrics to interpret the fascinating system of tree root communication through textiles, including dyed and printed cotton, silks, a variety of synthetics and sheers, and cotton batting. This communication is facilitated by forest fungi — a symbiotic relationship between fungi and tree roots providing a network of channels to communicate resources and messages between individual trees. Roy has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with a Major in Horticulture. She has been a full-time professional artist working with textiles for over 30 years, with a focus on trees and the connections they have with one another, and with other organisms and humans. She lives and works in Dundas, Ontario.

Knit Markers: Collaborating with Machines is the first solo exhibition for the artistic duo Greta Grip and Lee Jones. Knit markers, otherwise known as stitch markers, are knitting tools used to identify an important place in your knitting. In the same way, the works in this exhibition mark, record and make tangible both the collective and individual memories gathered throughout the installation period, as well as how that data is interpreted and visualized by machines. In this installation, Grip and Jones explore how data is gathered, and the invisible traces we leave behind. In these participatory artworks, visitor data is translated into soft, tangible visualizations through machines that knit or unwind stitches in response to visitor interactions. When collaborating with machines, they will at times respond in unexpected ways, revealing the ways machines act as their own material.

The Textile Museum is located at 3 Rosamond Street East in Almonte. Find more details at <mvtm.ca>.



Image by Lorraine Roy



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What Now, Lanark County Launches the IMAGINE Conference

By Paddy Vargas

On May 6 from 8:30AM to 5PM, come to the Almonte Civitan Hall to join us in envisaging a new way forward on the five life-defining national issues impacting us all. Presented by What Now, Lanark County, the Imagine: Learn/Inspire/Act Conference is a day-long event designed to explore, with experts and activists, what we have learned so far on issues of women's health, ending abuse and violence against women, human trafficking in Canada, and how men and women can work together to tackle what is "an epidemic" in Intimate Partner Violence. Coupled with initiatives on climate action in our local community, What Now Lanark County is envisaging a new way forward on these life-defining issues. Register now at Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434).

Speakers and Presentations

Resilience is Futile: Why we need systemic responses to systemic issues will be presented by Julie Lalonde and Tracey Lindeman. Rather than rewarding women for their ability to tolerate and endure hardship, we need to eliminate the obstacles that force them to fight so hard in the first place. As a survivor of intimate partner violence and stalking, Julie experienced a traumatizing legal system. As an endometriosis sufferer who waited decades for a diagnosis and adequate treatment, Tracey endured a traumatizing health care system. Together they will unpack the way "systems" set women up to fail. In doing so, they challenge audience members to consider the futility of resilience. With righteous rage and in-depth research, Tracey and Julie

will encourage us to work systemically to create an equitable world for all women and girls.

Community Collaboration in Anti-Trafficking Efforts will be presented by Marita Smith and Wendy Gee. Reports of human trafficking or sex trafficking very often make the national news. In 2021, seven men were charged with human trafficking in Lanark County. How is it that such things occur under our noses, in our local communities, without our noticing it? How can we recognize when it might be happening, and what action to take if there are concerns or suspicions? Wendy will describe the circumstances of human trafficking and describe its effects on victims. Marita will explain how human trafficking survivors can navigate immediate health care and long-term restorative care and recovery. She will also look at the enormous challenges they face and why inter-agency collaboration is pivotal in maximizing access to healing and support.

Could Your Relationship Be Affecting Your Health? will be presented by Tara Leach. Tara will explore the impacts of intimate partner violence on health, with a focus on non-fatal strangulation, traumatic brain injury, and reproductive coercion. As well as raising awareness on situations of coercion and control, it has recently come to light that many assault victims do not respond as expected due to undiagnosed concussions. This talk is of particular interest to health care and social service workers, as well as police and justice system workers dealing with victims of assault.

Learning From the Coroner's Inquest: Where are we now? Where should we be headed? will be presented by Pamela Cross and Kirsten Mercer. Last year's inquest into the Renfrew County triple femicide of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam led to 86 recommendations for systemic change and engaged the attention of the public province-wide. Learn more from this conversation between two lawyers as they explore what community-based activism has already led to and what steps we can take next to make our communities safe for women and children.

The New Masculinity: Debunking the Man Myths We Grew Up With will be presented by Alex Manley. "Masculinity" has come a long way in identifying and detoxifying itself in the past decade, but there is much work to be done. Alex Manley has written for a men's website for almost a decade. He will walk us through some of the most pernicious myths that men are still internalizing about how they should conduct themselves. In doing so, we can all gain a better understanding of the kind of life both men and women might experience once these myths are cast aside.

Is Lanark County Ready to Pull its Weight on the Climate Crisis? Climate Justice as a Global Feminist Issue will be presented by Sue Brandum. There is no more urgent fight for women right now than that of climate. The climate crisis will affect women more than everything else in the world — more than abortion roll-backs, more than oppressive governments, more than lower pay grades. As things stand, 80% of people displaced by the climate crisis globally are women.



At the Imagine: Learn/Inspire/Act Conference on May 6, lawyers Pamela Cross (above) and Kirsten Mercer will lead the discussion "Learning From the Coroner's Inquest: Where are we now? Where should we be headed?"

Climate justice is a global feminist issue. Sue will describe the recent and near-term pathways and obstacles for climate action.

For more information about the presenters and their topics, please visit <whatnowlc.ca>. Conference registration is available at Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434). If you have questions, please email <whatnowlanarkcounty@gmail.com>.



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EcoFest Westport — Doing Better Together

I do have reasons for hope: our clever brains, the resilience of nature, the indomitable human spirit, and above all, the commitment of young people when they're empowered to take action. — Jane Goodall

No question about it, these are challenging times. So... how to feel empowered, inspired, hopeful and encouraged? Come and mingle with your neighbors at a celebration of shared values and the “indomitable human spirit”, at the first annual EcoFest Westport — Doing Better Together. This event takes place on Saturday, June 3 from 10AM to 4PM at 43 Bedford Street, in front of Soho's / the Review-Mirror.

Westport in Bloom has sponsored a keynote speaker, Sean James. A well-known horticultural designer of beautiful, eco-friendly spaces, Mr. James will get the festivities off to a great start on Friday, June 2 from 7–9PM at the Westport United Church, with his talk entitled “Lawn B gone. Beautiful Alternatives to the Green Desert”.

Keeping in mind “local, accessible, innovative, fun and planet-positive”, organizers have invited creative folks, who are passionate about advocating for a healthy planet in a myriad of ways, to gather together. Some categories they identified include On the Water, In the Home, Your Lawn, Soil Regeneration, Food Production, Biodiversity, Young Voices, and Reduce, Reuse, Repair & Repurpose. Many presenters are professionals, others talented and knowledgeable amateurs. Many will have displays, some will offer demonstrations, samples and hands-on activities, and yet others will give short TED-style talks, workshops or Q&As. And, of course, there will be products for sale.

Here are some examples, just to wet your whistle! Workshops and topics include “Water is Life”, toiletries and cleaning products, diapers 101, how anglers can help protect wildlife, using hemp in building finishes, “felt a wildflower” workshop, EV Q&A, make a lasagna garden, how to do vermiculture, growing plants for pollinators, how to hugelkultur, fermenting foods, multi-media art workshop, heritage seeds, make a seed bomb, fungal dominant compost, greening the holidays, energy efficient refrigeration for businesses, the future (and present) of sustainable home design and building, nature-based play, heating alternatives, electric boats, soil restoration, CO₂ sequestration and plant nutrition, herbalism and foraging, naturalizing shorelines, invasive species, lake health, watersheds, The Youth Climate Action Summit, fish, how to build



On June 2 and 3, come to Westport for an evening talk on alternatives to lawns, and a full day of workshops, “playsops” and talks on planet-positive topics!

your own turtle nest protector box, and getting to know native plants.

Mireille LaPointe honours us by making the Opening Welcome at 10AM and later sharing her thoughts on Water is Life.

Come by the Better Together Circle’s table to check out the schedules and plan the talks and workshops you wish to attend. Capture the EcoWalking Tour Map of Westport and area on your phone for a walkabout. Then take a tour of the displays and make sure you and your children take in the Playzone for the nature-based activities that will be on-site.

Organizers are grateful for the financial support of Westport in Bloom, Westport Lions Club, St. Luke’s Leeds Anglican Church, Elgin, and the presenters.

EcoFest Westport is being organized by the Better Together Circle and friends. They are part of a caring community who want to learn, discuss and grow together. They plan community events focused on Truth and Reconciliation, sustainability, environmental issues and climate change. If you wish to find out more, or support this event by donation or volunteering your time, please contact them at <bettertogethercircle@gmail.com>

May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears. — Nelson Mandela

umberlune: Spooky Roots

Raised in both Montreal and Ottawa, indie singer-songwriter umberlune now calls Perth home. The small town inspired her first single, *Ghosts of 1816*, which tells the story of the early residents of Perth. The song was written for a Stewart Park Festival contest to mark the town’s 200th anniversary. “I blew the deadline — I didn’t even get to enter it!” she said with a laugh in a recent interview with Adam Weekes on Lake88. Despite missing the chance to have the song heard in 2016, umberlune felt that it was the right track to lead the release of her first full-length album, *Pretty Little Bones*.

Recorded and mixed by producers John Innes and Nicholas Boone at Vibration Studios Inc. (Osgoode) and TrenchAudio (Arnprior), then mastered by Ottawa’s Phillip Victor Bova, *Pretty Little Bones* is an Ontario album that doesn’t need big city slick to capture your attention. The songs draw stylistically from multiple genres, including folk, blues and rock. Nuanced guitar makes way for stirring vocals. The stories are rich, lyrical vignettes that go deep and then stick around for a while. At times dark or melancholy, often whimsical and always honest, these songs are undeniably relatable. You’ll catch yourself humming them days later!

Pretty Little Bones marks, in some ways, a bit of a broadening from the solo acoustic sound that



umberlune developed starting over a decade ago. Half the songs on the album are full band arrangements featuring electric guitar, bass and drums, provided by the aforementioned producers and Perth drummer Corey W. Lonesome. *Ghosts of 1816* also features Perth’s Town Crier Brent McLaren, and award-winning Ottawa bagpiper Matt Shephard!

The album cover art, a portrait of umberlune, was created by Perth painter (and also music artist) Alida Sont. She is credited in the liner notes with the statement: I knew you would understand when I asked for “beautiful intricate bone things, hair and magic”! Indeed, bones nestled in swirling hair are magical, but the real magic is in the eyes. You can’t stop looking at them! They invite you in, but also challenge you to really see what’s going on in

her head. The pretty little bones are the pieces, the parts, the shards of thoughts, dreams and memories, that become songs.

Pretty Little Bones will launch officially at a release party on May 18 at Bridge Masters Brewing Company in Perth. Situated at 29 Beckwith Street North, right next to a metal truss bridge built in 1889, it’s the perfect spot for an album that acknowledges the ghosts of the town where it was written. Tickets are available from Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485–6434).

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Age Friendly Health & Wellness Fair, Pakenham, Jun 1
 Blackburn Brothers, Westport, Jun 2
 Eco Fest Westport: Doing Better Together, Jun 3
 Red Trillium Studio Tour, West Ottawa, Jun 3-4
 Disney and Beyond, CP, Jun 4
 Author C.C. Humphries, Perth, Jun 9
 AGH Run/Walk, Almonte, Jun 10
 Tempting Providence, Perth, Jun 15-25
 Tripod, Almonte, Jun 18
 Almonte Home & Garden Tour, Jun 24
 CP Musical Tattoo, Jun 25
 Almonte Celfest, Jul 7-9
 Steve Strongman Band, Westport, Jul 13
 Monkeyjunk, Westport, Aug 10
 PuppetCon, Almonte, Aug 11-13
 Killaloe Craft Fair, August 11-13
 Highland Games, Almonte, Aug 26
 Almonte Fibrefest, Sep 6-10
 Miss Emily W. Band, Westport, Sep 7
 Almonte Fair, Sep 8-10
 Perth Autumn Studio Tour, Oct 7 & 8
 Jane Austen's Lady Susan, Perth, Oct 12-22
 Matilda - the Musical, Perth, Nov 16-19
 The Millworkers' Musical, Almonte, Nov 17-26

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge Spencer Scharf, The Cove 	<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disney's Beauty and the Beast Jr., Perth Murdered to Death, Constance Bay Community Outreach Breakfast, Ashton Music Trivia, The Barley Mow Eric Uren & Meghan Balogh, The Cove SF Bridge Club, Smiths Falls 	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Murdered to Death, Constance Bay Optimizing Kids' Mental and Physical Health through Breath, Pakenham Vineyards & Winemaking, Spring Flower Show, Carleton Place Trivia Night, Bowie's Almonte Bridge Club, Almonte Open Mic w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 	<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Murdered to Death, Constance Bay Doug van der Horden, The Cove Swing Dance, Almonte Introducing the Seven Gifts, Almonte Almonte Song Circle Collective The Sound of Music, Carleton Place Nonsense, Perth Open Stage, Bowie's Cashmen Ford, Waterfront Gastropub
<p>8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge The Co-conspirators, The Cove 	<p>9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music Trivia, The Barley Mow Hackberry Men's Shed, Carleton Place Eric Uren & Meghan Balogh, The Cove SF Bridge Club, Smiths Falls 	<p>10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditions for The Millworkers' Musical, Almonte Spring Trails Walk, Merrickville Trivia Night, Bowie's Almonte Bridge Club, Almonte Open Mic w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 	<p>11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonsense, Perth A Trio of One-Act Plays, Merrickville Almonte Song Circle Collective Open Stage, Bowie's Cashmen Ford, Waterfront Gastropub Carleton Place Toastmasters Club Garrett Mason, The Cove
<p>15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge Spencer Scharf, The Cove Monthly Meeting, Almonte 	<p>16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SF Bridge Club, Smiths Falls Music Trivia, The Barley Mow Eric Uren & Meghan Balogh, The Cove Ashton Community Outreach Breakfast, Ashton 	<p>17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove Pakenham Horticultural Meeting, Pakenham Trivia Night, Bowie's Almonte Bridge Club, Almonte Open Mic w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub 	<p>18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> umberlune CD Release, Perth Jazz Night w/Spencer Evans Trio, The Cove Almonte Song Circle Collective Open Stage, Bowie's Cashmen Ford, Waterfront Gastropub Swing Dance, Almonte Night at the Museum, Carleton Place
<p>22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hackberry Workshop, Carleton Place Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge Spencer Scharf, The Cove Head Over Heels, The Cove Almonte Horticultural: Succulents/Cacti, Almonte 	<p>23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hackberry Men's Shed, Carleton Place SF Bridge Club, Smiths Falls Music Trivia, The Barley Mow Eric Uren & Meghan Balogh, The Cove Head Over Heels, The Cove 	<p>24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trivia Night, Bowie's Almonte Bridge Club, Almonte Open Mic w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove Head Over Heels, The Cove 	<p>25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Angry Inuk film, Perth Open Stage, Bowie's Cashmen Ford, Waterfront Gastropub Almonte Song Circle Collective Carleton Place Toastmasters Club Head Over Heels, The Cove Gerald McGrath, The Cove
<p>29</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge Spencer Scharf, The Cove 	<p>30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Hidden Kingdom of Fungi, Almonte A Joyful Spring, Carleton Place Community Outreach Breakfast, Ashton SF Bridge Club, Smiths Falls Music Trivia, The Barley Mow Eric Uren & Meghan Balogh, The Cove 	<p>31</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Xanadu, Arnprior Trivia Night, Bowie's Almonte Bridge Club, Almonte Open Mic w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 	<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age Friendly Health and Wellness Fair, Pakenham Almonte Song Circle Collective Open Stage, Bowie's Cashmen Ford, Waterfront Gastropub Xanadu, Arnprior

Festivals

Franktown Lilac Festival, May 27, 8AM-4PM. Pancake breakfast, craft market, BBQ lunch & more. Centennial Hall, Franktown. twp.beckwith.on.ca

Literature

Author Visit with Judii Merle, May 6, 1PM. Anishinaabe author Judii Merle reads from her debut novel *Wabanang*. Carleton Place Library. Free, books \$20. artforaid.ca/events

A Conversation with David Johnston, May 28, 1PM. Canada's 28th Governor General discusses his book *Empathy: Turning Compassion into Action*. Free, register at missmillslibrary.com. Almonte Old Town Hall. millstreetbooks.com

The Hidden Kingdom of Fungi, May 30, 6:30PM. Importance of fungi in our forests, homes and bodies. Free, register at missmillslibrary.com. Almonte Library millstreetbooks.com

Local Food

Top Shelf Distillery Tour, May 6, 12-5PM. Tour the facility, find out about #No-MowMay. Caesar tasting "flight". Top Shelf Distillery, Perth. topshelldistillers.com

Carleton Place Farmers' Market Opening Day, May 13, 8:30AM-12:30PM. Market Square. cpfarmersmarket.wordpress.com

Perth Farmers' Market Opening Day, May 13, 8AM-1PM. Crystal Palace. perthfarmersmarket.com

Almonte Farmers' Market Opening Day, May 21, 8:30AM-12:30PM. Along the Alameda. almontefarmersmarket.com

Visual Arts

You Will Be Offended Opening, May 5, 5-8PM. Art by Patrick John Mills, Keith Busher and Jana Jaros, that invites you to get comfortable with being a bit uncomfortable. IArt Factory, Renfrew. Free. liveandlovethefactory.com

Arts CP Mega Spring Fine Art Show, May 6-7, 10AM-4:30PM. Arts Carleton Place's juried show with 76 artists, 15 demo booths. Carleton Place Arena. arts-carletonplace.com

Open Studio, May 6, 10AM-4PM. New works by stone sculptor John Schweighardt. Livingstones Sculptures, Lanark. livingstones-sculptures.ca

Indigenous Arts and Crafts Fair, May 6, 10AM-4PM. Arts, crafts, workshops and readings at Zion-Memorial Church and the CP Library. Free admission, donations to Art for Aid (artforaid.ca). zion-memorial.ca

Meet the Artist: Claude Lemay, May 7, 2-4PM. "Conversations with colour". MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners. gwstryde@outlook.com

Art in the Attic, May 13 (10AM-5PM), 14 (10AM-4PM). Almonte & Areas Artists' Association show & sale. Almonte Old Town Hall. Free admission. almonteartintheatric.wordpress.com

Monthly Meeting, May 15, 7PM. Speaker: Jen Swallow of Happy Wife Quilting. Guests \$5. Almonte Civitan Hall. \$25 annual membership. almontequiltersguild.ca

Meet the Artists of 3 Exhibitions, May 27, 2-4PM. Sue Adams, Sarah Anderson, Deborah Arnold and Mary Pfaff at Sivarulrasa Gallery, Almonte. sivarulrasa.com

Theatre

Murdered to Death, Apr 30, May 6 (2PM), May 2-5 (7:30PM). Comical whodunnit. Tickets: TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434. Rural Root Theatre. The Northwind Centre, Constance Bay.

Disney's Beauty and the Beast Jr., May 2, 7PM. Presented by a talented cast of rising young stars. Tickets \$15 from TicketsPlease.ca. St. Paul's United - Perth

The Sound of Music, May 4-5, 7:30PM & May 6-7, 2PM. Presented by the Mississippi Mudds. \$22 plus charges at TicketsPlease.ca. Carleton Place Town Hall. mississippimudds.ca. SOLD OUT

Nonsense, May 4-6 & 11-13, 7:30PM, May 7 & 14, 2PM. A zany, habit-forming musical! \$27 (\$13.50 students) from ticketsplease.ca. Studio Theatre Perth

Film: Babylon, May 5-6, 7PM. With Brad Pitt and Margot Robbie. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. \$12 at door. smithsfallstheatre.com

Auditions for The Millworkers' Musical, May 7, 1-4PM & May 10, 7-9PM. Audition for a new family-friendly play written by Fern Martin to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of Mississippi Mills! Info at laubar@sympatico.ca. Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Almonte

A Trio of One-Act Plays, May 11-13, 7:30PM & May 14, 2PM. *The Green Thumb Gang* and *The Black Chair* by Peter Taylor, and *Making Friends* by Guy Newsham. \$15 from merrickvilletheatre.org or at the door. Merrickville Community Centre

Angry Inuk film, May 25, 7PM. Challenging long-established perceptions of seal hunting. The Table Community Food Centre, Perth. facebook.com/thetablefc

Xanadu, May 31-Jun 3, 7PM. Tony award-winning comedic musical, by Two Rivers Musicals. Arnprior High School. \$20 adults, \$15 students. info@tworiversmusicals.ca

Youth

Beckwith Youth Dance, May 12, 6:30-8:30PM. Tie Dye Night. \$5 entry. Brunton Community Hall, Carleton Place. cmcgregor@twp.beckwith.on.ca

Music

Almonte Song Circle Collective, Thursdays at 6PM. Weekly acoustic session, new musicians welcome. Base Camp Brewing, 453 Ottawa Street, Almonte

Swing Dance, May 4 & 18, 6:30-9:30PM. Pop-up swing dance in Almonte, intro dance lesson @7PM. Hillside Reformed Presbyterian Church, Almonte. \$5 cash

Craig Cardiff Concert, May 6, 7PM. Fund-raiser for the Lanark County Community Justice Program. \$30 from Eventbrite. Almonte Civitan Hall. commjustice.org

Fauré and Friends, May 6, 7:30PM. \$22 (adv), \$25, \$20, \$10. 12 & under free. kanatachoralsociety.ca. St. Paul's Anglican Church, Kanata

The Dance, May 7, 2:30PM. A Cliff Edwards tribute to Garth Brooks & Tricia Yearwood. \$25 from Special Greetings, by calling 343-363-0933, or at the door. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. smithsfallstheatre.com

Music Surround Us, May 12, 7:30PM & May 13, 2PM. Arnprior Community Choir spring concert. \$20 adults, \$10 kids from White Pine Books. Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church, Arnprior. 623-7293

REPLAY (Beatles tribute), May 13, 8PM. Presented by Dream Rock 19+. Cash bar. Farrell Hall, Perth. \$34/\$39. ticketsplease.ca

Jill Barber, May 13, 8PM. Juno Award nominated singer-songwriter. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. \$39. smithsfallstheatre.com

Melwood Cutlery & The Long Sault Trio, May 14, 2PM. Roots and folk. \$25 from TicketsPlease.ca. MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners

Ambre McLean with D'ève Archer, May 14, 2PM. "Mother's Day Matinée" with songs and stories. \$25 from Eventbrite. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. smithsfallstheatre.com

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You Will Be Offended Opening, Renfrew Nonsense, Perth Murdered to Death, Constance Bay Sean Pinchin, The Cove Skyler Radmore, Ridge Rock Brewing Company Film: Babylon, Smiths Falls The Sound of Music, Carleton Place Born Ruffians, Neat Coffee Shop Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Scottish Country Dancing, Perth Ken Armstrong, Waterfront Gastropub Guitar Souls Duo, Urban Angus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts CP Mega Spring Fine Art Show, Carleton Place Open Studio, Lanark Indigenous Arts and Crafts Fair, Carleton Place What Now, Lanark County Conference, Almonte Nonsense, Perth Author Visit with Judii Merle, Carleton Place Michael "Spike" Wilcock, Westport Brewing Co. Film: Babylon, Smiths Falls Murdered to Death, Constance Bay Burlesque Show, Urban Angus Eric Uren on the Patio, The Cove Cheerfully Made Spring Market, Almonte Craig Cardiff Concert, Almonte Fauré and Friends, Kanata Top Shelf Distillery Tour, Perth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts CP Mega Spring Fine Art Show, Carleton Place Coronation Picnic, Carleton Place Auditions for The Millworkers' Musical, Almonte Old Time Country Dinner & Dance, Clayton The Sound of Music, Carleton Place Nonsense, Perth Meet the Artist: Claude Lemay, McDonalds Corners Bob Peppin, Waterfront Gastropub Matt Dickson, The Cove Cheerfully Made Spring Market, Almonte The Dance, Smiths Falls
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonsense, Perth A Trio of One-Act Plays, Merrickville RCMP Musical Ride, Almonte Beckwith Youth Dance, Carleton Place BOTR: David Rotundo, The Cove Scott Reeves, Ridge Rock Brewing Company Music Surround Us, Arnprior Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Scottish Country Dancing, Perth Ken Armstrong, Waterfront Gastropub Kyle Felhaver, Urban Angus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art in the Attic, Almonte Carleton Place Farmers' Market Opening Day Perth Farmers' Market Opening Day REPLAY (Beatles tribute), Perth Jill Barber, Smiths Falls Nonsense, Perth A Trio of One-Act Plays, Merrickville BOTR: David Rotundo, The Cove Almonte Hort Plant Sale, Almonte Jock River Paddle, Ashton Chris Murphy, Westport Brewing Co. Music Surround Us, Arnprior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art in the Attic, Almonte Perth Women's Show, Perth Melwood Cutlery & The Long Sault Trio, McDonalds Corners Ambre McLean with D'ave Archer, Smiths Falls A Trio of One-Act Plays, Merrickville Bob Peppin, Waterfront Gastropub Matt Dickson, The Cove Nonsense, Perth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meghan Balogh & Martin Smit, The Cove The Young Bucks, Ridge Rock Brewing Company Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Scottish Country Dancing, Perth Ken Armstrong, Waterfront Gastropub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almonte Farmers' Market Opening Day John Wilberforce/Birds of a Feather, The Cove Drag Show, Urban Angus J-W Jones, Neat Coffee Shop Rob Kerr, Al Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub Jon VW, Westport Brewing Co. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bob Peppin, Waterfront Gastropub Head Over Heels, The Cove
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Over Heels, The Cove Al Lerman, The Cove ASL Social, Carleton Place Skyler Radmore, Ridge Rock Brewing Company Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Ken Armstrong, Waterfront Gastropub C.A. and Sonny, Urban Angus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aaron Davis, Joey Wright and Mike Eckert, McDonalds Corners Head Over Heels, The Cove Franktown Lilac Festival, Franktown Titanic: The Canadian Story, Perth Dave Balfour, Westport Brewing Co. Meet the Artists of 3 Exhibitions, Almonte Robert Keyes, The Cove Sierra Levesque, Urban Angus Rob Kerr, Al Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Conversation with David Johnston, Almonte Japhy Sullivan, McDonalds Corners A Joyful Spring, Carleton Place Bob Peppin, Waterfront Gastropub Head Over Heels, The Cove
<p>General Fine Craft presents new blown glass by Paulus Tjiang, silver jewellery by Meredith Kucey, and quilts by Robert Pauly <generalfinecraft.com></p> <p>MERA presents <i>Conversations with Colour</i> by Claude Lemay <MERASchoolhouse.org> [Apr 7 or by appointment: gwstryde@outlook.com]</p> <p>Mississippi Valley Textile Museum presents <i>Woven Woods: A Journey through the Forest Floor</i>, and <i>Knit Markers: Collaborating with Machines</i> <mvtm.ca></p> <p>Sivarulasa Gallery presents <i>Nexus</i> by Deborah Arnold and Mary Pfaff [from May 19]; <i>Sue Adams: Early Works</i>, and <i>Sarah Anderson: In Hope but in Doubt</i> [from May 12] <sivarulasa.com></p> <p>The Art Factory presents <i>You Will Be Uncomfortable</i>, works by Patrick John Mills, Keith Busher and Jana Jaros that invites you to get comfortable with being a bit uncomfortable [from May 5] <liveloveartfactory></p> <p>The Almonte Library Corridor Gallery presents <i>All Good Souls</i> — a collection of portraits by Suzanne Snelling [from May 23]</p> <p>Online auction for Home Hospice North Lanark [to May 14] <32auctions.com/HHNL-Spring-Auction-2023></p>		

What Now, Lanark County "Imagine" Conference, May 6, 8:30AM-5PM. Imagine & share ideas about an equitable, kind, safe future for all. \$40 from TicketsPlease.ca. Almonte Civitan Club

Cheerfully Made Spring Market, May 6-7, 10AM-5PM. Different handmakers each day. Admission \$5. cheerfullymade.com. Almonte Community Centre/Arena

Old Time Country Dinner & Dance, May 7, 2-6PM. Music 2-6PM, dinner at 5PM. Musicians welcome. Clayton Community Centre. \$15; ages 6-10 \$7; under 6 + musicians free. 256-0740

Coronation Picnic, May 7, 1-4PM. Bring a lunch, picnic blanket and wear your best crown. Lemonade and cake provided. Carleton Place and Beckwith Heritage Museum. Free. cpbheritagemuseum.com

Spring Trails Walk, May 10, 10AM. 7k round-trip walk to Hanlan's Marsh boardwalk. Limerick Forest Trailhead, Merrickville. Free

RCMP Musical Ride, May 12, 5PM. BBQ starts at 6PM. Tickets \$15 from mississippimills.ca/events. Children under 5 free. NLAS Almonte Fairgrounds

Almonte Hort Plant Sale, May 13, 9-11AM. Perennials, vegetables, trees, books and garden stuff. Behind Almonte Library. adhsmailbox@gmail.com

Jock River Paddle, May 13, 10AM. Start at the bridge on the 9th Line of Beckwith. Park at the Ashton Pub, shuttle bus starting at 9AM. \$20 per paddler. cmcgregor@twp.beckwith.on.ca

Perth Women's Show, May 14, 12-4PM. Fun, food, fashion show and inspirational speakers. Tickets \$50 from northfolkcafe.ca. Crystal Palace, Perth

Pakenham Horticultural Meeting, May 17, 7PM. Kathy Kitagawa, "Essential Oils for Health and Wellbeing". St. Andrew's United Church, Pakenham. 256-4768

Night at the Museum, May 18, 4-8PM. Celebrate International Museums Day by visiting the CP & Beckwith Heritage Museum. Free. cpbheritagemuseum.com

Almonte Horticultural: Succulents/Cacti, May 22, 7:30PM. Jamie Roy (Acanthus) presents, then members make succulent dish garden. adhsmailbox@gmail.com. Cornerstone Community Church, Almonte. \$2; 1st mtg free

ASL Social, May 26, 7PM. A fun, informal evenings where folks can chat in ASL. All ages and all abilities welcome. Tim Horton's, Carleton Place. Free. blackbearhealing-home.com

Titanic: The Canadian Story, May 27, 1-3PM. Showing by author Michael Dupuis of the documentary *Titanic: The Canadian Story*. Register at 267-1224. Perth & District Union Library. Free. perthunionlibrary.ca

Age Friendly Health and Wellness Fair, Jun 1, 10AM-3PM. Renew connections, rediscover the needs, and reimagine how to best serve seniors in the community. Stewart Community Centre, Pakenham. Free. events@bridginggenerationspakenham.com

umberlune CD Release, May 18, 7PM. Release of *Pretty Little Bones* by indie singer-songwriter umberlune. \$12.50 concert, \$25 concert & CD from ticketsplease.ca. Bridge Masters Brewing Company, Perth

Aaron Davis, Joey Wright and Mike Eckert, May 27, 7:30PM. Spontaneous improvisation that defies classification. MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners. \$25 (plus fees). ticketsplease.ca

Japhy Sullivan, May 28, 2PM. Singer-songwriter and fiddler. \$25 from TicketsPlease.ca. MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners

A Joyful Spring, May 28 & May 30, 7PM. Town Singers Spring Concert featuring uplifting music. \$15 from Tickets Please, 12 & under free. All Nations Church, Carleton Place. cptownsingerson.com

The Cove (Westport, 273-3636): 5-8PM unless noted; Mon Spencer Scharf, Tue Eric Uren & Meghan Balogh, Wed Wings 'n Tunes w/ Shawn McCullough, 5:30-8:30PM

May 4 Doug van der Horde

May 5 Sean Pinchin, 6-9PM, \$10

May 6 Eric Uren on the Patio

May 8 The Co-conspirators,

May 11 Garrett Mason, 7-10PM, \$25

May 18 Jazz Night w/ Spencer Evans Trio, 8-10PM, \$10

May 19 Meghan Balogh & Martin Smit

May 20 John Wilberforce/Birds of a Feather,

May 21 Head Over Heels

May 25 Gerald McGrath

May 26 Al Lerman, \$10

May 27 Robert Keyes

Urban Angus (Arnprior, 558-5050)

May 5 Guitar Souls Duo

May 6 Burlesque Show

May 12 Kyle Felhaver

May 20 Drag Show

May 26 C.A. and Sonny

May 27 Sierra Levesque

Neat Coffee Shop (Burnstown, 433-9960): 8PM.

May 5 Born Ruffians, \$50

May 20 J-W Jones, \$35

Ridge Rock Brewing Co. (Carp, 470-2337): 7PM

May 5 Skyler Radmore

May 12 Scott Reeves

May 19 The Young Bucks

May 26 Skyler Radmore

The Waterfront Gastropub (CP, 257-5755)

Saturdays Rob Kerr, 3-6PM, Al Tambay, 9:30PM-12:30AM

Wednesdays Open Mic w/ Redneck Limousine, 8PM-12AM

Thursdays Cashmen Ford, 8PM-12AM

Sundays Bob Peppin, 3-6PM

Fridays Ken Armstrong, 8PM

Westport Brewing Co. (Westport, 273-2739): Tunes on Tap, 2-4PM

May 6 Michael "Spike" Wilcock

May 13 Chris Murphy

May 20 Jon VW

May 27 Dave Balfour

Hackberry Men's Shed Breakfast, 7:30AM every other Tuesday Gourmet Restaurant, CP. dougjohnson70@outlook.com

Scottish Country Dancing, 9:30AM every Friday. All levels welcome. McMartin House, Perth. 264-2767

Carleton Place Toastmasters Club, May 11 & 25, 7PM. All welcome. via Zoom, contact for link. carletonplacetostmasters@gmail.com

Community Outreach Breakfast, May 2, 16 & 30, 9AM-12PM. Varied brunch selection. Proceeds to CP Hospital. Music on May 2. Ashton United Church,

Optimizing Kids' Mental and Physical Health through Breath, May 3, 7PM. Presented by Brenda Deugo-Mills, 5 Span Strong Health Program for Kids. St. Andrew's United Church, Pakenham. Free. standrewsunitedpakenham.org

Vineyards & Winemaking, Spring Flower Show, May 3, 7PM. Speaker Brian Hamilton. Zion-Memorial United Church, Carleton Place. \$5 or \$15/yr. cphorticulture.ca

Introducing the Seven Gifts, May 4, 7PM. Learn about the Seven Grandfather Teachings and hear from artists creating an installation in Almonte. In-person or live stream. \$15 from ticketsplease.ca. Almonte Old Town Hall. mmallmyrelations.ca

Pub Listings

Bowie's (Smiths Falls): Wed Where is my Mind Trivia, 8-10PM (sign-up online); Thu Open Stage, 8PM (casual sign-up); Fri original live music 8:30 & 11:30PM

Carp Masonic Lodge: Mon Carp Celtic Jam, 7PM, \$3

The Barley Mow (Almonte, 256-5669): Tue Music Trivia, 8PM

Community

Naismith Men's Shed Zoom, 10AM every Friday via Zoom, contact for link. nicolas-dfry@gmail.com

SF Bridge Club, Tues, 12:45PM. Proof of vax req'd. Smiths Falls Legion. 256-4747

Almonte Bridge Club, Wed 12:45PM. Almonte Legion. 256-4747

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FLYER SALE ENDS MAY 31, 2023

Springtime Blues at The Cove Inn

David Rotundo, the acclaimed Canadian blues harmonica player, singer and songwriter, is scheduled to perform at the historic Cove Inn in Westport for two consecutive nights on May 12 and 13. These shows are part of the popular Blues on the Rideau (BOTR) music series, which has gained widespread recognition for its showcase of top-calibre Canadian and international blues artists.

Rotundo's evening performances with his band promise to be an unforgettable experience for blues enthusiasts, as he delivers his signature brand of high-energy, genre-defying blues, rock and soul music. Known for his fiery harmonica solos and passionate vocals, Rotundo has toured extensively throughout North America and Europe, and has garnered critical acclaim for his virtuosity as well as his ability to engage audiences with his dynamic stage presence. His most recent album, *So Much Trouble*, was produced by the legendary Lee Oskar and has garnered international accolades and air play. Over the years David has been one of the most popular performers at BOTR — this will be his ninth visit.

Also on May 13, Rotundo will perform an acoustic lunch duo with The Cove's manager Seamus Cowan, showcasing the more intimate and stripped-down side of his artistry. Audiences will be treated to an afternoon of acoustic blues tunes performed against the stunning backdrop of Westport's Upper Rideau Lake, with Cowan joining Rotundo on vocals and bass.

Rotundo's performances at The Cove Inn on May 12 and 13 are expected to be among the most memorable of this year's Blues on the Rideau series. Fans can look forward to a unique and captivating musical experience, featuring one of the genre's most distinguished and respected musicians.

Mark your calendars now, because the dynamic **Blackburn Brothers** take the stage



David Rotundo returns to The Cove in Westport to play two evening Blues on the Rideau shows and an acoustic lunch

at The Cove on June 2. The band consists of brothers Brooke on guitar and vocals, Duane on keyboards and lead vocals, and Cory on drums, along with friends Andrew Stewart on bass and Neil Braithwaite on sax. The Blackburn Brothers' unique blend of blues, soul, funk and R&B is rooted in their rich heritage of African American music. Their father, Bobby Dean Blackburn, was a mainstay keyboardist on the vibrant Toronto R&B scene for decades. The Blackburn Brothers received the Maple Blues Award for Best New Band when they hit the scene in 2010 and have since been nominated for a Juno and multiple Maple Blues Awards. With two great albums already released and another one on the way, their appearance at Blues on the Rideau promises to be a night to remember.

These shows are all expected to sell out early, so audiences are encouraged to secure their spots as soon as possible. Tickets for the dinner and show are available now for \$100 (plus tax) by contacting The Cove at 273-3636 or <info@coveinn.com>.

A Joyful Spring!

By Danette Hanneman

Spring is here, and members of the Carleton Place Town Singers, along with our fearless leader Laurel Tye, are excited to welcome our new accompanist, Tony Stuart.

Tony is a well-known local musician with a wealth of musical knowledge and talents. He plays many instruments and has mastered the clarinet, sax and piano. I first met Tony in his role as Notre Dame High School's Music Teacher. For almost 20 years, Tony developed an extraordinary band program that inspired hundreds of students from grades 7 to 12 to exit their comfort zones, discover and learn to play a myriad of instruments. From beginner to advanced levels, he made all students feel welcomed, seen and appreciated. Ask any of his former students... his band trips were legendary. Since his retirement he has partnered in developing two radio shows: the *Way Back Music Machine Radio Hour* and *From Memphis to Merseyside*, which will take you back to incredible moments in rock 'n roll history.

In addition, Tony has recently had an album review published by *The Spill Magazine* in Toronto, and fittingly is a former writer for theHumm. He also continues to wow audiences with his smooth, classic, jazzy sounds in the duo Somerset Combo. As busy as Tony is, we are blessed to have his musical genius enhance our community choir.

Our talented Director Laurel Tye also has an impressive musical history, having been musical director for countless performances by the Mississippi Mudds, as well as a (now

retired) music teacher and principal. On behalf of Laurel, Tony and our members, we hope you can join us for our upcoming concert entitled *A Joyful Spring*.

The concert will be held on May 28 and May 30 at 7PM at All Nations Church, located at 39 Bridge Street in Carleton Place. Tickets can be purchased for \$15 at The Granary (107 Bridge Street in Carleton Place), at Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434) and through our members. This concert is sure to uplift your spirits! We look forward to seeing you there!



Director Laurel Tye and accompanist Tony Stuart invite everyone to The Town Singers concerts on May 28 and 30



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Journey to a Dream

Memoir Charmingly Captures the Ups and Downs of Building a Cabin on a Lake

Back in college, John Fenik met the love of his life, Laurie, while sailboarding. They fell in love, and later married.

"We love being on the water and being outdoors," John says. "Sailing, hiking, camping. As we got older, a cabin on the water became the dream."

by John Pigeau

Building a cabin, that is. And since the happy couple has recently realized their long-time dream, John has written a memoir about the experience. In *Fox Tail: A Tale of a Canadian Timber Frame Retreat*, he records his memories of precisely how that dream materialized.



Author John Fenik with his grandson Kael at the lake

"I wrote this book for my three grandsons," he says. "When I have left this little blue planet, I hope my grandsons will read about how Fox Tail came to be, and I hope they will continue to protect and enjoy the property they will inherit."

The book begins in the winter of 2019, when John, the former Mayor of Perth, and Laurie decided to look for a property. Their search took them to a water-access-only property on a lake near Westport. Their winter hike to see the property was a treacherous and comical one — with Laurie nearly falling off a cliff and John accidentally butt-dialing 911 — but when they got there, they immediately fell in love with the space.

"The sheer beauty of the property," was what did it, John explains. "The sloping terrain, mature oak and maple trees, and the waterfront that was deep and clean. It ticked all the boxes. The fact that the property bordered a conservation area was a bonus."

After they'd bought the property, John and Laurie made the hike a few times, hauling over Adirondack chairs and such. John found himself quite drawn to the beauty of a good winter hike in a space so quiet and secluded.

In the book, he writes: "Hiking in the spring, fall, and summer is fun and exciting, but hiking in the winter is something uniquely special. I love the solitude that a winter hike brings. The forest is different in the winter. It is quiet and yet alive with the wilderness

activities of nature. When an animal moves, a squirrel jumps from a limb or a pileated woodpecker drills at a tree, the sound is amplified in the cold afternoon air. When hiking in the winter, I hear things I don't hear during any other season. On one hike, sitting down for a rest, I heard small waves lapping at newly formed shoreline ice. It sounded like a hundred miniaturized wooden wind chimes moving in a light wind. The winter snow changes known landscapes and trails. The snow also allows you more land access. Cross-country skis and snowshoes can get you to places you have never seen. You can get off the beaten path."

The journey wasn't all smooth sailing, of course. After the ice was gone, there was a perilous boat trip and the property's dock almost met a watery grave. The couple met some eccentric new neighbours, including a "smuggler friend," as John calls him. And then in March of 2020, a global pandemic put everyone's lives on hold.

If you skip to the happy ending of the book — with John and Laurie sipping wine by their firepit, listening to loon calls, enjoying lake time with their grandsons, and planning on building an outdoor shower — well, John says the rewards were well worth the trouble.

"It was totally worth it," he says. "The pandemic, planning approval issues, building supply shortages, the labour it took to build the cabin, weathering storms, constantly needing to problem-solve — I would do it all over again. It was, and continues to be, a wild adventure."

The adventure taught him a few things as well. "I have learned that in order to achieve great things, you really need to place yourself outside your comfort zone," he says. "Building the cabin turned out to be a learn-as-you-go project. The fact it was on a water-access-only lot made it more challenging, but in the end much more rewarding."

What would John say to folks who read the book and think — hey, maybe I can do this too?

"Go for it!" he says. "Do not hesitate for a second. It is all about the journey. Life is short. Follow your dreams now."

A charming touch at the end of the book is a list of John's "Fox Tail Recipes." Included are recipes for "Campfire Escargot," "Lemon Peppered Shrimp," "Prosciutto Wrapped Melon," and "Stuffed Rainbow Trout." John's favourite recipe is a fairly simple one for Caesar Salad. But it might just hold some special sort of magic.

"I first learned to make this salad in college," John recalls. "I was cooking dinner for a girl I was dating and I made this salad. She must have enjoyed it, because she has been with me ever since."

And the rest, as they say, is history.

Proceeds from sales of *Fox Tail: A Tale of a Canadian Timber Frame Retreat* will be donated to libraries in the area.

"I figure any money made should go to the libraries in the communities where my book is being sold

because libraries are important," John says. "Specifically, I would like the donation to go to children's literacy programs. Other than teaching our children to be good and kind people, teaching them to read is the next most important thing we can do."

The memoir is delightfully illustrated by Isabelle Halmos and Brandon Bergeron. It's an enchanting, comical and deeply moving read, told in a down-to-earth and eloquent style. This book has heart, and lots of it. I wholeheartedly recommend it.

You can buy John Fenik's *Fox Tail: A Tale of a Canadian Timber Frame Retreat* at Spark Books & Curios in Perth, the General Store & Bakery in Pakenham, Curious & Kind in Almonte, and Kudrinko's Independent Grocers in Westport. Books are also available from the author — signed copies, too, I'd imagine — through his website, <johnfenik.ca>.

The Smiths Falls Community Theatre Presents

Jill Barber

Saturday,
May 13
at 8pm



Jill Barber is a three-time Juno Award nominated singer-songwriter with an unforgettable voice once heard, never forgotten.

Her critically acclaimed repertoire spans a transformative spectrum from folk, to vocal jazz, to pop, and includes songs in both French and English.

\$39.00
(taxes included)



Tickets available at:

- Special Greetings, 8 Russell St. E., Smiths Falls (cash/debit)
- smithsfallstheatre.com (Visa/Mastercard/Paypal)
- By Phone - 613-283-0300 (Visa/Mastercard)
- At the Door - 1/2 hour before performance (cash/debit)

53 Victoria Avenue, Smiths Falls

Roaring Into the Twenties on Broadway

Lance Luce began playing theatre organ in his hometown of Detroit at age 10. By 19 he was appointed Head Organist at Radio City Music Hall in New York, on the biggest Wurlitzer ever built!

Earlier in his career he played at family restaurants in Michigan and famously in Toronto for over eight years at the Organ Grinder, to more than a million diners. He has become an acclaimed international theatre organist in the US, Canada, Britain and Australia.

Lance is on the staff at the Fox and Redford Theatres in Detroit and the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor. More recently he became the head organist for the Detroit Red Wings at the new Little Caesar's Arena. He has also been a church organist for 47 years, currently at Cross of Christ Lutheran Church in Bloomfield Hills.

On June 4 at 2:30PM, Lance will be performing in Perth on a large theatre organ composed of 295 stops.

Rather uniquely, it was installed four years ago so that it may be played in combination with St. Paul's existing 68-stop classical organ with 2300 speaking pipes!

Visitors from across Eastern Ontario are invited to Perth to hear Lance swing and toe-tap his way through a century of beloved Broadway musicals — from jazz, blues and ballads, through marches and the epic shows of modern times.

Enjoy the ambiance of a refurbished, fully accessible and air-conditioned heritage space with excellent acoustics. In the words of New York virtuoso pianist Joel Martin after performing there in 2019: "this is a world-class hall".

St Paul's United Church is located at 25 Gore Street West in Perth. Tickets are \$20 for adults; \$35 for families. Students are admitted for free. They are available at the door (cash only), and online or by phone from Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434).

LANCE LUCE RETURNS TO PERTH THEATRE ORGAN CONCERT



Roaring
into the
Twenties
on
Broadway

Sunday,
June 4
2:30 pm

St. Paul's United Church
25 Gore St. W., Perth

Tickets:
\$20 Adult ■ \$35 Family ■ Students Free

Cash at the Door OR
Online: ticketsplease.ca
Phone: 613 485 6434

MMLT Turns Twenty

Two Decades of Preservation and Protection

“Beautiful Mississippi Madawaska wilderness protected for all time, where all species thrive and people engage with nature.” That’s the vision statement of the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust (MMLT), which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. In addition to planning several special events to commemorate that landmark, MMLT also recently welcomed Stacie Lloyd as their new Executive Director. Before joining MMLT, Stacie was the Manager of Community Development with the municipality of Merrickville-Wolford, and has worked in regional economic

by Kris Riendeau

development, commercial lending and small business management throughout Lanark and Renfrew Counties. She and her family also operate a small mixed farm in Lanark County. theHumm contacted Stacie to find out more about her new role, the organization, and the celebration.

theHumm: You’ve had a few months to settle in to your new position — what have you learned about MMLT that you didn’t know before taking on this job?

Stacie Lloyd: So much! I’ve always had an interest in nature and the outdoors, so I knew about MMLT from its properties that are open to the public, like High Lonesome Nature Reserve and Blueberry Mountain with their great hiking trails. What I’ve learned is that lands like these can be protected by a land trust like MMLT for all of time and future

generations. MMLT provides a way to legally protect and steward private lands with ecological value, and restrict them from future development.

When I was perusing the website, I first thought: “MMLT has a pretty ambitious vision”. But then I looked at the bios of the staff and Board and decided: “that’s the group to realize it!” Tell me a bit about the people who devote their time to preserving ecologically sensitive lands for the long term.

I thought the same thing when I first looked into the organization, and now I see the expertise and dedication of the Board and staff first-hand! They are an amazing group of people who share their knowledge, volunteer their time, and work hard to help reach our goals. They are serious about protecting wilderness areas for future generations, yet always cheerful and ready to share a story about a rare species sighting or an amazing hike on one of the MMLT properties. I think anything can be accomplished when it comes to this group — they truly make a difference.

How does the mandate of a Land Trust differ from that of a Provincial Park or other wilderness preservation organization?

Common themes in our mandates include protecting ecosystems, biodiversity, and significant elements of our natural and cultural heritage, as well as educating about nature and reducing climate change. Similarly for larger organizations like the Nature Conservancy of Canada, which preserves lands and waters on a much larger scale across the country, and Parks Canada’s system of National Parks. When I think of our beautiful provincial parks, government-owned, generally staffed and supported by volunteer-driven “Friends of the Park” organizations, “tourism, open to the public for day use/camping/rentals, and fees for public use” all come to mind.

MMLT operates on a local community-based level where our members, donors and volunteers drive and contribute to our success. We are a non-profit, charitable, non-government organization that protects and preserves private lands for future generations. We do this by entering into legal agreements with



In addition to planning several special events to commemorate their 20th anniversary, Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust also recently welcomed Stacie Lloyd (pictured below) as their new Executive Director

important mentorship role, all to help us determine meaningful priorities.

Acquiring and protecting additional wilderness lands to preserve for the long term and share with the community is a top priority. These are lands that have ecological, biodiverse, aesthetic and cultural value. They may have endangered species or rare ecosystems or old forests, and MMLT’s mandate is to protect and steward these important places for future generations and to encourage people to engage with the lands and nature for all its benefits.

Another priority is community engagement, through our outdoor activities and events, our themed nature walks, and our educational programs that teach people of all ages about the unique local plants, animals and geology that can be found in this region. We also aim to get to know and connect with the community better — the people, organizations, businesses, stakeholders and potential partners who share our goals for nature and the environment. Our priorities and the actions we take to protect lands are the most important tools we have to help conserve biodiversity and reduce climate change and environmental challenges.

Like many local charities, we rely upon donations and financial support, so that is a challenge that we continue to face. Thankfully, we have an incredible community and many people, businesses and funding agencies who have shown their support for MMLT and believe in our goals. It’s very encouraging to have this backing to meet the challenge. There are many ways that area residents and visitors can engage and support MMLT, whether through becoming a member, volunteering, making a donation, leaving a gift in their Will, or simply coming out to attend an event. We have some fantastic events coming up this year, including a Mother’s Day spring ephemeral walk on Sunday, May 14, and special anniversary celebrations on the first weekend in June, so follow us on social media to learn more details about this, plus some other exciting announcements coming soon!

What are some ways in which MMLT will be celebrating their 20th anniversary, and where can people go to find out more about them?

We’ve been planning and our committees of volunteers will be unveiling our 20th anniversary events soon! Last year we acquired a property from a generous donor, and we will be sharing this with the public at a grand opening in early June to coincide with our 20th anniversary — we are very excited about this special event. Other anniversary celebrations are happening throughout the year with events such as the Backyard Beauties Auction, a Radiothon, educational nature walks, and the Festival of the Wild Child for all ages, to name a few! Our website <mmlt.ca> includes event details, and people can follow us on social media for the latest updates. We invite the community to enjoy our outdoor events and share in the celebrations!



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local private landowners to acquire and manage these biodiverse places, with their unique flora, fauna and geology, through direct ownership or under a Conservation Easement Agreement with a landowner. A number of our properties are open to the public for nature appreciation where we host outdoor activities and events, and manage one or more walking trails. Others have more restricted access, limited to activities such as scientific research and special educational events or projects.

Over the next year or so, what are some of your top priorities, what major challenges do you foresee, and how can area residents and visitors assist and engage?

This is a big year for MMLT as we celebrate our 20th anniversary. This milestone has certainly led us to reflect on the past and look ahead to important priorities for the future. Now is a critical time for nature, and we’re really proud of how our work at MMLT contributes in such a meaningful way to the environmental issues that we’re facing. We’re taking a close look at the input we’ve received over the past couple of years, from strategic planning and visioning exercises, members surveys, and the community overall, including past directors who now play an

Milestone Celebration for Arnprior Community Choir

Celebrating over 33 years of joyful singing, the Arnprior Community Choir will present their spring concert on May 12 and 13 at Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church in Arnprior. It will feature an uplifting program of music designed to inspire both audience and choristers, and will also debut a newly commissioned work entitled *Music Surround Us*, written by Almonte composer Ian Douglas.

The Arnprior Community Choir (ACC) was first established in 1991 as a course for the night school Continuing Education Program at Arnprior District High School. The course allowed the newly minted community choir to create a "home" in which to develop and flourish as a musical ensemble. Flourish it did! Founded by the current musical director, Lisa Webber, the mixed choir quickly grew to become a mainstay of Arnprior's cultural arts community, boasting 65 to 95 members. ACC's three primary goals are to provide a wide variety of musical entertainment in the region, to hire young emerging soloists from the Ottawa Valley who are developing their music careers, and to teach choral music that challenges and entertains choir members in enthusiastic and uplifting rehearsals.

In 2020-21, just as the choir was to celebrate their 30th season, the pandemic hit. All rehearsals were put on hold. Using Zoom and singers' masks,

ACC kept their passion for singing strong. This year, Lisa is determined to showcase and celebrate the choir. "We commissioned Almonte composer Ian Douglas to write us a song; a song that tells our story as a long-time choral ensemble in Arnprior. It's amazing! It truly captures what it feels like to sing together and connect." Ian Douglas wrote: "When we gather as a choir, we bring our collective hopes, fears, worries and desires — but when hammers, strings and voices ring out in common purpose, our spirits may soar. Most importantly, it reminds us that we belong." Local artist and choir member Nicole White was also inspired to create an original painting based on Ian's music. Now designed into beautiful, commemorative cards, the choir will be selling Nicole's cards at both concerts, five cards for \$20, as a way to further share their milestone with the community.

The community has two opportunities to experience this special program held at Glad Tidings Pentecostal Church (116 Baskin Drive West, Arnprior): on Friday, May 12 at 7:30PM, and on Saturday, May 13 at 2PM. Tickets can be purchased ahead at White Pine Books (152 John Street North), at \$20 for adults and \$10 for children under 12. Remaining tickets will be available to purchase at the door. For more information about the choir, please visit <arnpriorcommunitychoir.com>.



At their concerts on May 12 and 13, the Arnprior Community Choir will debut a new composition by Almonte composer Ian Douglas. That piece inspired choir member Nicole White to paint the image above, which the choir is selling as commemorative cards!

The Reever Report

A Good Haircut

There is no time in a lady's life when she feels less lovely than sitting in the hairdresser's chair swathed in a black cape, her hair wet and sleeked to her head, looking straight into that mirror that reflects someone else's old face. For the time we're there, we'd like to simply shut our eyes and wait for the final result.

by Glenda Jones

I swear guys don't ever think this. They likely see a good lookin' dude, maybe a little too hairy, but handsome in every regard. They ask for a Number 2 clipper cut, get the trim, the brush on the neck, the cape whipped off, and away they go. We meanwhile are hoping that we're going to emerge an hour later looking a tad more respectable than when we plunked ourselves in the chair.

It's a true thing that changing hairdressers is nearly as traumatic as filing for divorce. How many of us have had an abysmal haircut and then returned a second time because we can't find the nerve to break off the relationship with our hairdresser? It takes years to find the right person, so it's a huge upheaval if anything happens to that connection.

I was ten years with one hairdresser... and then the crisis. Imagine the gall: she fell in love, got married, moved far away and left me without a proper haircut for months. I was a shaggy mess before I ventured into the next salon. However, luck was with me, and only one haircut in I knew I'd found someone really good. In fact, I didn't even feel dorky sitting in the big chair in the plastic cape because we had conversational banter about our dogs, our woodlots and a lot more. I looked forward to seeing her every five weeks. I always came away with a good cut that would grow out in an orderly fashion, leaving me feeling fashionable in the interim until I'd see her again.

Then along came the "dreaded age" and the salon was shuttered. I'd been there one day before the first lockdown, so at least for a few weeks I didn't worry, because, like all of us in our naïveté, I thought it would only be a couple of weeks. But no, time dragged on, I got looking worse and worse — as we all did of course! And then it hit me: the shop was not only shuttered, it was emptied! Without a "see ya later" my hairdresser was gone I knew not where.

For a nanosecond I considered growing my hair long, I was so bereft. Then through the grapevine I found a home shop not far from my house. Relief, until I ventured in and sat near four of the biggest marijuana plants I've ever seen. Hmmm. Not a good sign, and indeed not a good haircut either. In fact, I looked worse than when I arrived. That didn't deter me from paying though, and foolishly leaving a tip besides. No courage at all!

The upside was that I discovered my former miracle worker living far in the countryside, a nice drive in the fall, not so good in the winter, and for a couple of times, we called it a day-trip, and I came away happy once again. Gravel roads and icy conditions made that excursion impossible to continue though.

Then came Lockdown #2, the long one that took a toll on everyone's beauty regime. When it finally ended, there was more scrambling to find the perfect stylist. Everyone I tried was booked for months, and some people wouldn't even share the name of their favourite hairdresser, so passionate were they about preserving their place in line. I was sure I'd never get a decent haircut again, and would be going around looking like the cow chewed it off, as my Dad used to say.

However, a chance encounter with a friend sporting a perfect cut got me thinking outside the beauty salon box, and lo and behold, we have both found a stylist who can cut hair with precision and efficiency. Why didn't I think of this before? A certain barber

in town does an exceptionally good cut. At first it was a little intimidating to go into the barber shop, but not anymore. I make the appointment, slip into the chair, and in less than 15 minutes I'm out of there with a good haircut, no lady gossip banter, no blow dry fussing and primping, no hair down the back of my neck, just a really good cut that's going to last a couple of months. Sam is careful and considerate, asks what I want, makes sure I like the look after, and is reasonably priced as well. Besides he's got a huge TV with sports playing, so I can watch soccer or golf or whatever sport is featured that day. What's not to like?

I may have missed the memo that says women can't go into a barber shop. If so, I'm glad I did. It's taken me three years to find this shop, and my fervent hope is that it's going to be there for a long time. I can't even think of going through this traumatic experience again.



Photo by Nick Fawings on Unsplash

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Vital Signs

It was standing room only for the Perth and District Community Foundation (PDCF) launch of their *Lanark County 2023 Vital Signs Report: Collaboration. Community. Resilience*. Over 50 people turned up to the Perth Library on April 4, to hear about the health of their community and to talk about what they can do to make it healthier. theHumm reached out to Victoria Gibb-Carsley, PDCF's Executive Director, to find out more.

by Kris Riendeau

theHumm: What is Vital Signs?

Victoria Gibb-Carsley: Vital Signs is a community-based project that uses local data to measure the vitality of communities and support action for change. Supported by Community Foundations Canada, this is the second Vital Signs Report PDCF has issued. The last was in 2017. PDCF used data from the Statistics Canada 2021 Census as well as surveys conducted by local partners, and conversations with community members to form a picture of the health of Lanark County. The 2023 report covers 10 themes including housing, health and wellbeing, arts and culture, the environment, wealth and income gaps, transportation, and civic engagement.

Who is the intended audience?

The report is meant for local governments, community organizations, and members of the public. Shortly after the launch, I gave a presentation to Tay Valley Township Council and will be doing the same for Lanark County Council as well as Drummond North/Elmsley and Lanark Highlands Councils. I will be meeting with the Perth Chamber of Commerce and also sharing the report with a range of local organizations. We don't want the report to sit on a shelf. We want it to inspire action.

What are some of the current positive "vital signs" of our community?

Central to what we found was a spirit of collaboration in Lanark County. The report is full of examples that demonstrate that we are a community that volunteers, that wants to protect the environment and that is concerned about the wellbeing of others. Despite the pandemic, we pulled together as individuals, organizations, local governments and businesses to take action. We planted community gardens, launched tool libraries, developed emergency housing and delivered meals. All of this is so encouraging, especially as the pandemic winds down and we look to the future.

Are there some findings that were particularly surprising or distressing?

Though the report demonstrates a strong community response during the pandemic, it also shows that there were and continue to be growing challenges in communities across the County. There is a very worrisome lack of affordable housing, many families face food insecurity, there is a mental health crisis — including among youth — and our local health-care systems are under stress. All of these problems existed before, but the pandemic magnified the issues and more people became aware that there are burdens placed on some far more than on others. Those burdens remain and, in some cases, are getting heavier. We found two areas that need to be addressed most urgently: the lack of affordable housing and poverty.

The report shows that over 700 people are on the waiting list for rent-geared-to-income housing, and the cost of market-price rental housing increased by 15% in Lanark County between 2016-2020. The spike in housing costs during the pandemic has made things even worse. As we know, people who are not adequately housed are more likely to face health challenges and isolation from the community as well as barriers to opportunities. As one survey respondent wrote, "You need safety to be yourself, to be heard, to have a safe place to live. To not have that takes everything out of you. It drains you."

While income levels across Lanark County vary, there is a shocking percentage of households with income under \$40,000 before tax. In Perth, for example, 26% of households earns under \$40,000, while in Smiths Falls, it's closer to 28%. A living wage in Lanark County is estimated to be \$19.05 an hour, which equates to just over \$40,000. This means that over a quarter of families in Perth and Smiths Falls are having trouble covering basic needs like shelter, food, child care, clothing and transportation. There was a 40% increase in the number of visits to local food banks from 2021-2022 because of insufficient wages, cost of living increases and pandemic-related job losses.

theHumm has a particular interest in arts, culture, the environment, and civic engagement. Are there any specific findings in the report along those themes that you would like our readers to be aware of?

The report shows that Humm readers are not alone in their strong interest in the environment. Preserving the natural world was a major concern for the community. According to the report, addressing climate change and protecting the environment was a priority for 82% of the PDCF community respondents.

Another thing that stood out are high levels of participation in cultural events and visits to libraries. Across Lanark County, there were 115,000 visits to libraries and over 340,000 materials borrowed. And, though maybe not news to Humm readers, this

community loves music and the arts. As part of our community consultations we spoke with James Keelaghan, the Artistic Director of the Stewart Park Festival. He noted that, "After two long years without any summertime music in the park, the community came back stronger than ever, drawing the largest single-day crowd the festival had ever seen." There is a vibrancy and desire to connect.

In terms of civic engagement, the report reveals that volunteerism has been down across Lanark County. We think that has a lot to do with the pandemic restrictions. Now that things are shifting to a post-pandemic reality, we are hoping that volunteerism will increase again. As one of our community survey respondents wrote, "We have communities with heaps of folks that are ready and willing to support/care for one another."

Who were the key players who worked on Vital Signs?

The Vital Signs Report Committee was a real team effort. The PDCF Vital Signs Committee was led by board member Liz Sutherland. Support, guidance and labour was provided by the committee members: Jean Dunning, Stephanie Gray, Erika Heesen, Laura Holder, Reid Kilburn, Kara Symbolic and Michael Couchman. I helped coordinate the administrative aspects and we hired Lisa Deacon as our researcher, analyst and author. When it was all ready to go, we asked Jaana Brett of Paaper Studio in Perth to design the report. It was a collaboration from start to finish.

What's next?

As I mentioned earlier, we don't want the report to just stay on a shelf. We want it to inspire action for change. So, PDCF is going to host a series of Vital Conversations related to the report's themes in the months ahead. We hope that community organizations, local government staff, council members, other decision makers and members of the community will attend and work together to find ways to improve the community.

We held our first Vital Conversation on April 20 when we partnered with the newly created Hospice Hub. Hospice Hub put together an excellent presentation and then I facilitated the conversation about the way forward for the community-centred and comprehensive hospice care that is so desperately needed.

Readers interested in learning more about Vital Signs, upcoming Vital Conversations or PDCF are welcome to visit <pdcf.ca> or contact me by email at <info@pdcf.ca>.



Top 10 Reasons To Audition for a Community Theatre Production

By Susan MacAulay

"Because you'll laugh at least ten times at every rehearsal," Bonnie Vallentyne answered without hesitation when I asked her why people should audition for community theatre.

Vallentyne, who is the Musical Director for *The Millworkers' Musical*, the family-friendly Fern Martin play that will be staged at the Almonte Old Town Hall in November of this year, is no stranger to laughter, community theatre or risk-taking. A year ago, she "starred" as Elizabeth Kelly in the puppet play *Sherlock Holmes and The Hound of the Basketballs*, her first time ever puppeteering.

An adventurous spirit is part of what drives some folks to get involved in community theatre.

"I was terrified!" Kathy Duncan, who owns 8008 Lingerie, said of her first experience and then chuckled her way through the telling of how it came about.

"It was about ten years ago. Thora Pugh was directing one of Fern Martin's plays," Duncan recalled. "We were talking one afternoon and all of a sudden, out of the blue, she says: 'I want you to audition for the play I'm directing.'"

"But Thora, I said, I can't sing or dance or memorize lines," Duncan says and bursts out laughing as she tells me Pugh's reply: "Fine," Thora said, 'Be at the Textile Museum at 2PM on Sunday for the audition.'"

Duncan went under duress and was cast as the play's narrator, a role that suited her big voice and self-professed inability to remember lines. Since then, she's been in five Fern Martin plays and two others written by Rob Riendeau. She finally vanquished her stage fright last year, she says, when she appeared in *Sketchy Santa*.

Well-known and beloved Ed Lawrence also played in *Sketchy Santa*.

Lawrence, who was the Guest Host of CBC Radio One's *Ontario Today* weekly gardening segment for forty years, is no stranger to the Almonte stage, having played numerous roles besides his *Sketchy Elvis*. He is in the same French conversation group I'm in; we meet at the Almonte branch of the Mississippi Mills library every Friday afternoon. I questioned him as I had the others. His answer centred around friendship and community.

"To meet friends you haven't met yet," he said with a smile. "And to contribute to the community while doing something positive for yourself. Most of these productions are fundraisers of some sort. So, while you're bettering yourself, you're also bettering the community. It's all for the greater good. Everyone wins."

"Plus, participating is an opportunity to test your memory while having fun."

Sue Fowler agrees. Fowler has been involved in theatre for over sixty years; she's worked on more than four hundred shows in roles ranging from Executive Producer to Director to Properties Designer. She's been on the stage too. She'll be in charge of hair and make-up for *The Millworkers' Musical*.

"Three reasons to audition for community theatre?" Fowler repeated my query. "That's easy: to have fun,



make new friends and revel in the applause at the end of it all!"

Veterans, newbies, professionals and amateurs alike agree on why people should audition for community theatre productions. Mainly because it's a golden opportunity to: 10) Contribute to your community, 9) Do something energizing for yourself, 8) Discover hidden talents, 7) Walk through fear, 6) Exercise courage, 5) Gain confidence, 4) Laugh and play, 3) Meet new people, 2) Make new friends, and 1) HAVE FUN!

Audition for *The Millworkers' Musical!*

Come out and audition for *The Millworkers' Musical* — a new family-friendly play written by Fern Martin to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of Mississippi Mills!

Presented by the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum and produced by Barb Dickson, this show will be directed by Kris Riendeau with musical direction by Bonnie Vallentyne. The team is seeking actors and actor-singers — primarily adults, but there are also roles for teens. They will rehearse on Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons in May and June, take a break to learn lines over the summer, and then recommence rehearsing from September until the show goes up from November 16–26.

Auditions will take place in the multi-purpose room at the Textile Museum <mvmt.ca> on Sunday, May 7 from 1–4PM, and on Wednesday, May 10 from 7–9PM. Scenes will be provided, and anyone interested in a lead part will be asked to sing an excerpt from a song. An accompanist will be available if you would like to bring your own music, but you can also sing "Happy Birthday, Mississippi Mills"! (There are also two big parts that don't require you to memorize lines).

For more details, please contact Barb Dickson at <laubar@sympatico.ca>. Follow the show and find out more at <facebook.com/TheMillworkersMusical>!

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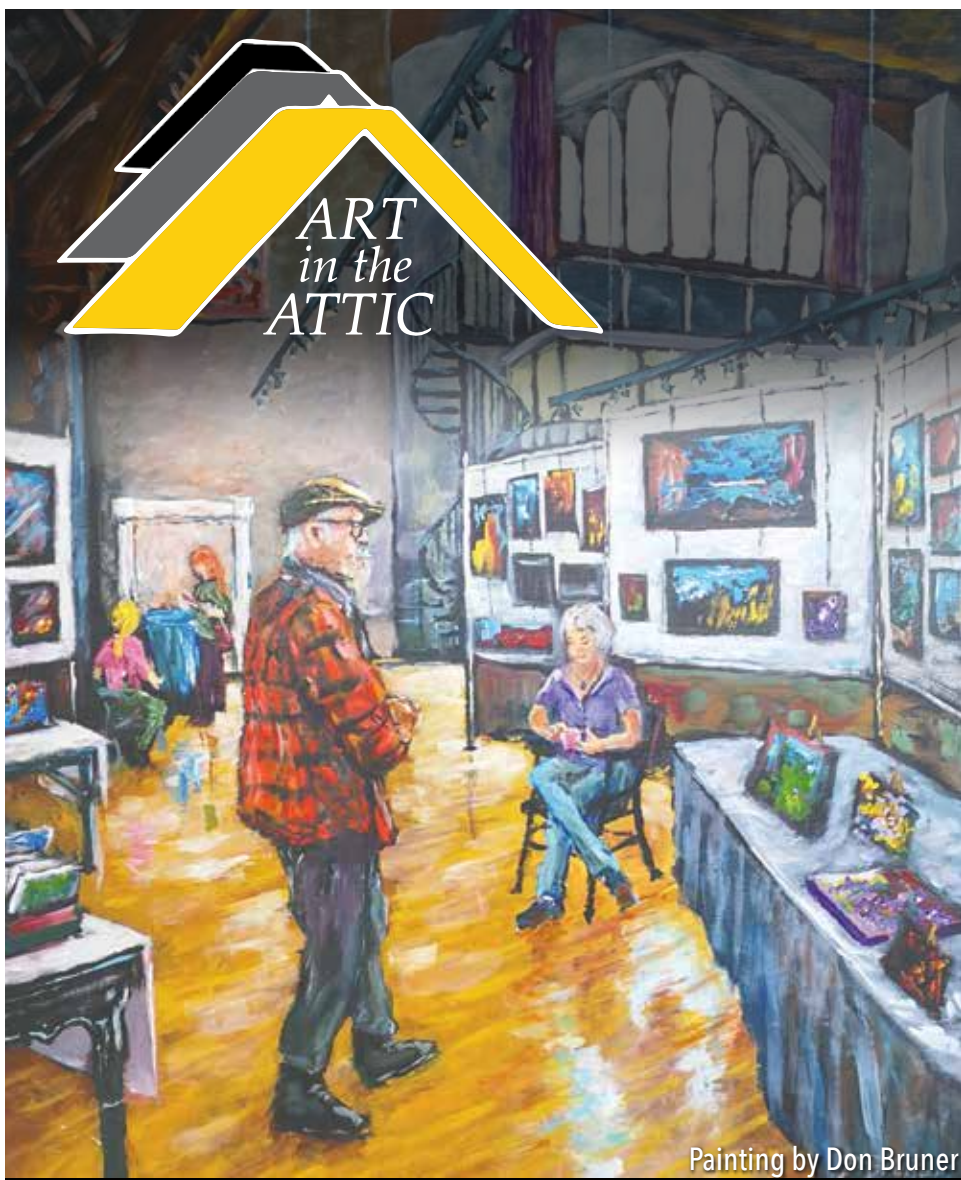
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