

free

The Hummer

Arts, Entertainment & Ideas



The 2017 Gift Giving Guide

p.30 & 31



December's Events

p.17



Christmas Spirits...



...and More Christmas Spirits!



The Art of Sarah Jaynes p.5



Ho! Ho! Ho!

There are so many ways to celebrate the holiday season in this area. If you would like to celebrate the New Year in a new home, just give me a call!

P.S. Looking for a Santa for your event? I have my own suit (and beard!), and would be happy to assist for a nominal donation to the local food bank.

Pat's Picks for December: *Anne of Green Gables*, Carleton Place, Dec. 1-3
A Christmas Story, Perth, Dec. 1-3 & 8-10
Aladdin, Smiths Falls, Dec. 8-10 & 14-17
It's a Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life, Almonte, Dec. 15-17

Patrick Kelly
Sutton

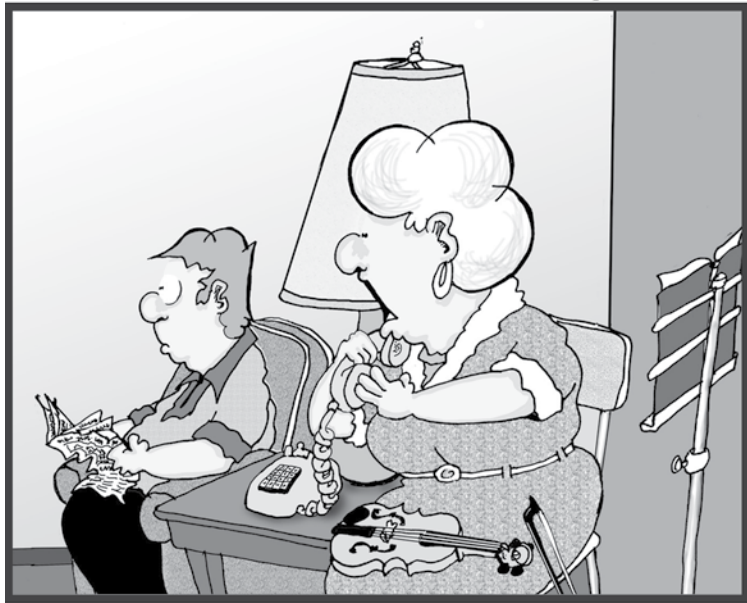
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“Mother thinks I could get a lot closer to the right pitch if she gives me an amplifier for Christmas!”

Readers Write

Food for Thought...

**Re: Bill 148 —
“Fair Workplace, Better Jobs Act”**

I am the sole proprietor of a small café in a small Ontario town. As with any business, my prices are set according to what my expenses are and what my customers are willing to pay. If my food costs or utility costs or rent or payroll costs increase, I need to put my prices up in order to pay for those increases.

If we as a society have decided that employees in lower-income jobs should be paid more, we need to fully understand this means the prices we are now paying for most of our goods and services are set much too low.

Unfortunately, many consumers — regardless of income level — are really only interested in the lowest price, or the best deal. They may in principle believe the cashier ringing their groceries through deserves to make more money, but very few consumers would choose to pay for that with significantly higher food costs. What they are concerned about is “price-matching”.

Please don't blame businesses for how little some jobs are paid — it is the consumer who chooses price over quality and service who has decided the worth of those positions. Let us take full responsibility for wanting a more “fair” society and accept the inevitable inflation.

Sincerely,
Petra Graber, Owner
The Good Food Co.
Carleton Place, Ontario

At right: Also in early 2016, **Janet Conlin** wrote: “I had my daughters take my picture with theHumm in Palm Springs, California. You can't really tell but I am wearing my Tay Valley 200th anniversary t-shirt. It was a wonderful trip, and my family was impressed with your awesome community newspaper.”

Who's Reading theHumm



Above: Back in 2015, **Conny Menger** took theHumm on a fabulous tour, making stops at the Simbavati Game Reserve in South Africa (above); in Piran, Slovenia; and in Venice, Italy. Certain Humm staff are a bit jealous of that issue!

Below: In early 2016, **Janet Rice** wrote: “This is a photo of my guide and me reading January's issue. I am trekking in the Bale Mountains Park in Ethiopia at an altitude of about 37000m — and it is cold! I am trekking with Jamal (my guide in the picture), a cook, and two guys looking after the horses that carry supplies. Camping is primitive — no water, no facilities at all. Such fun — why do I do these kinds of things?!”



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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!

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Thanks this month to:
Fern Martin and the amazing cast and crew of *A Peak at Pakenham*, for raising over \$12,000 for the Pakenham Library expansion (and having almost too much fun doing so!). What a talented and dedicated group!

**Can't Decide What to Give?
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Happy Local Holidays!

Here at theHumm we're big on local economies. The retail and service businesses in the small towns that we cover play a huge role in the cultural life of those towns. Each store, restaurant, or small enterprise attracts and serves a particular clientele — some inside the community, some from outside. Some businesses host their own special events; others join together with local festivals to make the whole experience more vibrant. Many provide support in cash or in kind to local initiatives. A healthy local economy is an essential component to a healthy community.

by Kris and Rob Riendeau

It is with this in mind that we bring you theHumm's 17th annual **Gift Giving Guide**. Our hope is that you'll find two kinds of inspiration in the many lists that appear throughout this month's issue. As you peruse the "Gifts for Coffee & Tea Lovers," "Gifts for Environmentalists" and "Gifts for Funky People," we hope you'll discover the perfect gift for everyone on your list. But we also hope that you'll be inspired to investigate even more of the independent, locally owned and run businesses throughout our coverage

area. In doing so, you're likely to encounter not only friends and neighbours, but also some old-fashioned small town peace and joy at this potentially hectic time.

If you've been reading theHumm for a while, none of this is news to you. You've been shopping locally and feeling pretty good about it. So how about putting your mouth where your money is? When you find a local service or establishment or product that gives you joy, let your friends and neighbours know (and perhaps bestow a kind word upon the owner or employees as well!). That kind of investment is so much more powerful and useful than outrage and despair when a beloved business closes its doors.

The gifts we buy locally do double-duty by giving pleasure to the recipient and at the same time supporting the business of a friend or neighbour. If the gift happens to be fair-trade, environmentally-friendly or made by a local grower or artist, then it does triple-duty! We would like to thank the participating merchants for taking the time to send in their Gift Giving Guide suggestions, and to thank our readers for shopping locally and thereby supporting both the shops and our paper.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy holiday season, and a local New Year!

Gifts for Hosts & Hostesses

- Ceramic succulents**, Cashmere & Rose.....\$12.95-34.95
- Hand-blown glass bowls (6-8" diameter)**, Chris Van Zanten.....\$59-79
- Beer glassware & beer to put in it**, Crooked Mile Brewing Co.....\$5-60
- Organic maple syrup, 250 ml fancy leaf glass bottle**, Fulton's.....\$12.50
- Kapristo Mountain twig reindeer**, General Fine Craft.....\$12-20
- Cheese knife set**, L.G. Lee & Sons.....\$26.50
- Cheese, crackers, fine chocolate, specialty oils**, Pêches & Poivre.....\$5 & up
- Customized gift basket**, Perth Brewery.....various
- Poinsettias**, Reid Gardens.....\$15

Gifts for Animal Lovers

- Raku elephant or penguin sculptures by Hanne Lawrence**, Bittersweet....\$150-340
- Porcelain animal tiles by Mary Philpott**, General Fine Craft.....\$15-350

Gift Giving Guide Shop Directory

Here's an alphabetical list of the shops that are participating in this year's Gift Giving Guide, followed by the town in which they are located and the page on which you can find their ad. Great gift suggestions can be found throughout this issue, organized in categories. Happy local shopping!

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- Vamos Outdoors.....Almonte, p.7
- Whole Medicine.....Pakenham, p.28



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Rag Bag Cabaret Comes to Almonte!

In an already busy month, there's yet another reason to pull out your social calendar — this time to attend the *Rag Bag Cabaret* taking place at the Almonte Old Town Hall on Friday, December 30. But before you plead festive fatigue, you gotta check out the level of talent — and fun — involved in this one!

Crazy Cabaret Credentials

Rag Bag Cabaret is a “sublime evening of solid gold fun, drunkincense and myrrth!” This adults-only show includes music, comedy, burlesque, magic and circus. Past iterations have included Sook-Yin Lee, Jessica Holmes, Frank Spadone and Samantha Bee, to name a few. The show is hosted by award-winning comedian and dazzling ringmaster **Rachelle Elie**.

Rachelle has been producing *Rag Bag* — Toronto's longest running cabaret — since 1996. A graduate of Studio 58 Theatre School and Bishop's University, Rachelle has been studying and performing comedy across Canada and the U.S. for the last twenty years. This past summer she performed a sold-out run of her show *S#I'T I'm in Love With You Again* at The Edinburgh Fringe Festival. The show was picked up by the SOHO Playhouse in September for an off-Broadway run in the prestigious Fringe Encore Series. She has written five one-woman shows and won an Outstanding Comedy Award for her show *Joe: The Perfect Man*. *SEE Magazine* has gushed that “Elie is an exquisite performer...”, and *The Montreal Gazette* describes her as “a gifted performer and improviser, but also frighteningly intelligent.”

Off to Almonte

After living in Toronto for twenty-five years, Rachelle moved to the Almonte area two years ago with her teenage boys and OB-GYN husband. Their move

was inspired by the entire family's strong desire to be closer to nature and their cottage on Otty Lake. The transition from city to country has been relatively easy. Rachelle finds the commute to the Ottawa clubs and gigs easy compared to the traffic she experienced in Toronto, and her husband adores the eight-minute country drive to the office. Rachelle is now comedienne-in-residence for Ottawa's *Alterna Savings CrackUp* comedy festival, which has a goal of de-stigmatizing mental illness.

Both Rachelle and her husband worked in Kenya for several years, and a portion of the proceeds from the *Rag Bag Cabaret* will go towards Gynocare Women's Fistula Hospital in Eldoret, Kenya <gynocarefistulacenter.org>.

Look at this Line-up!

Always a stimulating blend of genres, this *Rag Bag Cabaret* will feature comedy by Wafik Nasralla and Ryan Dennee, magic and mental stunts by Rynestone, music by Chris Elie, burlesque by Rhapsody Bluth, and possibly some surprise guests. Here's a bit more about the performers...

Considered one of the funniest one-eyed Egyptian Canadian comedians on the planet, **Wafik Nasralla** will have you laughing at the oddest things, including Wafik. One of the most likable comedians on the circuit, his broad-based comedy has a universal appeal.

Ryan Dennee explains: “I'm a storyteller with about 98% of my comedy coming from real life experience. Crowd work (going off the cuff) is a big strength of mine. I take risks with comedy, but I'm respectful. I've had a passion for comedy since I was young, and I've taken that passion and transformed it into a life-long career of making people laugh around the world.”

Don't miss the New Year's *Rag Bag Cabaret* — happening in Almonte on Dec. 30...

... and hosted by Rachelle Elie!



“Rynestone performs mind-blowing magic and mental stunts that amaze audiences of all ages. Forget everything you thought you knew about magic, because you are about to witness it... with an edge.”

Sublime singer/songwriter **Christophe Elie** has released two albums and recently shared his stories and unique brand of socially-conscious folk songs on tour in Ontario and the United States. His new album *Bridging Borders* explores the beauty and challenge of intersections in life of culture, language, geography, religion and tradition.

Rhapsody Bluth is the fire-eating, shimmy-shaking darling of Ottawa's longest running burlesque troupe, Rockalily Burlesque. She is a touring artist and she has appeared at the Toronto Burlesque Festival and the National Arts Centre. Known for her irrepressible charm and joyful love of the tease, Rhapsody is passionate about bringing the magic of burlesque to new audiences of all walks of life.

Sign Me Up!

The Almonte New Year's *Rag Bag Cabaret* takes place on Friday, December 30 at the Almonte Old Town Hall. Cocktail hour starts at 6:30, and the show begins at 8PM. Advance tickets are \$25 from Mill Street Books (256-9090) or by finding New Year's Rag Bag Cabaret at <eventbrite.ca>. Snoozers pay \$30 at the door.

SEASON'S GREETINGS
from Downtown Carleton Place!

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Sarah Jaynes — The Art of Survival at Mississippi North

For artist and full-time art teacher Sarah Jaynes, “Art is the itch that needs constant scratching.” It is how she communicates her feelings, it makes her feel whole, it is a language that she must speak.

by Sally Hansen

Her charcoal drawings and recent paintings of wildlife are beyond accessible — you want to take care of the adorable fox cub, put the flamboyantly coloured moose on your child’s bedroom wall, and hang the bunny where you can see her first thing in the morning to cheer you up. Jaynes’ animal portraits succeed brilliantly in achieving her artistic goal of evoking emotions.

Her words say it well: “I want to pollinate other people’s walls with the connections I see. I want them to experience what I felt when I saw the deer, when I watched the bunny twitch her nose and examine me.” Jaynes knows that humans are inherently linked to nature, and she wants her wildlife art to foster and strengthen those healing connections. When she isn’t driving her three sons to their various sports activities, she spends time with them outdoors at the family’s small cottage on the edge of the Mississippi River. They tease her when she slows down as she drives past “her” herd of cows each day on her way to work. “When you stop and watch, you make the connection — you feel the emotion,” she explains. She is planning to paint a series of her “commute cows.”

Creativity Explosion

Until recently, Jaynes’ personal art consisted primarily of commissioned charcoal portraits of pets and children. Several years ago, an incident with a talented Grade 12 student precipitated her own exploration of different techniques. In an attempt to encourage the budding artist to experiment beyond his extraordinary ability to “reproduce anything”, Sarah splattered paint over one of her own drawings to illustrate other possibilities. It did. She made the connection between classical drawing and street painting and began spraying paint over her charcoal drawings through interesting filters like laundry baskets.

About a year later, while demonstrating spontaneous realism

in class, she used leftover paint from a student’s palette to execute her charcoal drawing of a fawn in paint. She has been painting ever since. Her new works are vibrant and explosive. Pinks and purples and aquas abound. Grounded in her superb drawing skills, the new works exude an innocent enjoyment and energy. They are a refreshing break from dystopian angst.

Raisons d’être

The toughest question theHumm’s featured artists have to answer is “WHY? — Why do you create art?” Their answers appear on the back of their Trading Cards. The question is tough because we insist that they condense their passion into one sentence.

Jaynes doesn’t need motivational slogans that advise “Live your life like there’s no tomorrow.” An extremely close call with death changes everything — especially the things you took for granted. How you invest in the gift of your future occupies front of mind for a very long time. She knows for certain that her family and her art are her raisons d’être. The challenging birth experience of one of her sons, compounded by her own lengthy struggle to overcome a life-threatening infection, left her and her entire family stronger, more appreciative, and empathic. Her brush with death also cemented her conviction that a brush in her hand is essential to her life.

Juggling Priorities

Art is her passion — both creating it and teaching it to others. Her biggest quandary is allocating time between the two while she and her husband raise three boys. Sarah grew up in Québec and met her husband when she was twelve years old and her family moved next door to his in Kingsville, Ontario. The couple married ten years later, and words are inadequate to express the delight on her face as she described her ongoing happiness with their relationship. When she experienced her severe health crisis while on holiday in the U.S. his quick action saved her life, and his love and support sustained her throughout her daunting two-year recovery.

She has been immersed in art throughout her life. Her father balanced competing demands as a sculptor and an Anglican priest, and her parents encouraged her to follow her heart. After high school she pursued her B.F.A. studies with



ARTIST TRADING CARD

a major in painting at the University of Ottawa on a scholarship to study in French. She then completed her B.Ed. to teach art. After working at the National Gallery for a few years, she worked for the Ottawa Public School Board and then the Ottawa Carleton Catholic School Board. When their first son was born, the couple decided to relocate to Almonte, so she transferred to the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (CDSBEO) and has been teaching at Notre Dame Catholic High School in Carleton Place since 2002.

As the school’s treasured art teacher for the past fifteen years, Jaynes values the connections she makes with and for her students. Ten years ago she decided to create a special space for her special needs students and founded “Without Exception: Exceptional Art from Beautiful Minds”. She secured funding within the School Board and the program has grown to include over 40 artists from across the CDSBEO and is shared with school boards across Canada. Visit <facebook.com/exceptionalart> to see the glowing testimonies to the fruits of Sarah’s selfless generosity. She tells me her remuneration is emotional — “It blows my mind seeing what it means to the artists and their families... Without Exception was born out of my desire to highlight the fact that seeing and moving and thinking differently from the established ‘norm’ is beautiful; that these kids are not exceptions, they are exceptional; and their visions deserve attention. Nobody is an accidental meeting of chromosomes; we are all beautifully made.”

A Brush in Her Future

Her new lease on life has precipitated a shift in her priorities. After twenty-one years of putting her own creativity on the back burner, Sarah Jaynes is actively researching and planning for her eventual future as a fulltime artist. With the creation of her new artist identity as Mississippi North, she is establishing a social media presence. A few weeks ago she was runner-up in a “Pitch Party”, where entrepreneurs compete for assistance in growing their businesses. For Canada’s sesquicentennial she collaborated with photographer Shawn De Salvo (profiled in December of 2013) to create four stunning limited edition prints. Each double exposure image features a Mississippi North charcoal drawing blended with a DESA Photography landscape image to create a heartwarming celebration of their picturesque hometown.

Based on her energy, her enthusiasm, her determination and her talent, liberally sprinkled with a sense of adventure and topped off with a mischievous sense of humour, I offer the following advice. Save Sarah Jaynes’ Trading Card, visit her innovative and highly effective website at <mississippinorth.com>, put her coordinates in your cell phone to follow her on social media, and enjoy watching this talented artist flourish.



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WHO Sarah Jaynes

THE HUMM

WHAT Wildlife Charcoal Drawings and Paintings, Art Teacher

WHERE Cheerfully Made Goods + Markets, 72 Mill St., Almonte; <mississippinorth.com>; <etsy.com/shop/mississippinorth>; <sarah@mississippinorth.com>, social media

WHEN Throughout December at Equator Coffee Roasters, 451 Ottawa St, Almonte; By appointment at Mississippi North Studio at Carriageway Studios, between 63 & 65 Mill St., Almonte

WHY "Art is the itch that needs constant scratching — it is a language I must speak."

ARTIST TRADING CARD

Get a Grip!

Seniors Get a Free Grip on Winter Walking

The new "Get A Grip" program, led by Mills Community Support and Community and Primary Health Care (CPHC), will help Lanark County seniors get a grip on slippery winter walking conditions — for free! This program will get a pair of anti-slip and easy-to-use ice grippers into the hands — and onto the boots — of any resident of Lanark County over the age of 65.

Anyone under the age of 65 can get a grip while helping a senior in their community, by buying a pair of ice grippers at \$25, which is well under retail cost. A portion of this purchase helps fund the free-to-seniors distribution program in an ingenious "pay it forward" model. Anyone who can afford to participate by paying it forward is encouraged to help with the program.

Community members can also support the program by making donations to the "Get A Grip for Christmas" campaign, either at <themills.on.ca> or by cash or cheque at any distribution point.



The new "Get A Grip" program will help Lanark County seniors get a grip on slippery winter walking conditions — for free!

With climate change leading to more days of icy conditions per year than ever before, there is an increasing urgency to help seniors stay safe, as well as active and connected, in winter. Unintentional falls are the leading cause of injury for Ontarians 65 and over, and directly result in costs of one billion across the province.

The Get A Grip premium ice grippers are manufactured by an Ontario company specializing in safety equipment. Designed to be easy to wear and use, even in extreme environments like construction sites, the grippers are slipped over a boot and held in place by a wide and secure stretch band. When indoors, the band easily allows the grippers to slide around to the top of the boot for safe walking on interior surfaces.

For more information, please contact Jeff Mills at <jmills@themills.on.ca> or 256-1031 x263, or Patti Lennox at <plennox@cphcare.ca> or 257-3296 x2303.

Need 'em... need 'em... got 'em...
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Proceeds from the 2018 Perth Polar Bear Plunge will support The Table Community Food Centre's innovative food and community engagement programs.

the Table community food centre
More Information: www.thetablecf.org/plunge
613-267-6428 x 8, plunge@thetablecf.org

Gifts for Readers

- The Book Seat, books & tablets, The Book Nook.....\$49.99
- "The Unlikely Redemption of John Alexander MacNeil", Mill Street Books..... \$21
- "Touchstones" historic mystery, Patricia Josefchak.....\$25

Gifts for Grandparents

- Premium ice grippers (free for folks 65 & older), Get A Grip.....\$25
- Saskatoon serviceberry shrub, Hub Hospice Tree Sale.....\$36
- "Touchstones" historic mystery, Patricia Josefchak.....\$25
- Custom gift baskets with fine foods, Pêches & Poivre.....\$25 & up
- Custom metal Christmas tree ornament, The Silver Shingle.....\$25 & up



Deborah Arnold, VIGIL



Jim Hake, POMO D'ADAMO



Jane Irwin, SPINE



Carly Belford, FLOWER PAINTING



Dale Dunning, GOOD VIBRATIONS

3rd Anniversary Show
Nov 24 - Dec 30, 2017

Featured artists: Sue Adams, Sarah Anderson, Deborah Arnold, Russell Baron, Carly Belford, Adrienne Dagg, Dale Dunning, Barbara Gamble, Jim Hake, Jane Irwin, David Kearn, Gayle Kells, Susan Low-Beer, Sanjeev Sivarulasa, Susan Tooke, Mirana Zuger

Vernissage/Opening Celebration: Sat Dec 2, 2017 3pm-6pm
with special musical guest: Michael Costello (piano)



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Jolabokafloð — and Other Fun Events

As the weather gets colder, we turn to the holiday season to bring light and warmth inside. Traditions vary around the world, but one that stands out to me as a librarian is the Jolabokafloð, or “Christmas Book Flood,” a tradition in Iceland of giving books to each other on Christmas Eve and then spending the night reading. A book as a gift is a magical thing; equal parts storytelling, learning, and a portal to another world.

by Erika Heesen, Librarian

As you’re getting ready for the holidays, your local public library has tons of programs and reading material for you! Here at the Perth & District Union Public Library, we’ll be screening a **classic holiday movie** every day at 1PM over the holiday break from December 23 to January 7 (except on December 24–26, 31, and January 1). You can also sing along during Gerry Mitchell’s **Christmas Concert** on Tuesday, December 19 at 10:30AM. Speaking of films, the Mississippi Mills Public Library is launching a new **film club!** Join them at their first screening on December 13 at 1:30PM with *The Polar Express*. Films will continue on Wednesday afternoons once a month at the Almonte branch.

Keep an eye out for Carleton Place Public Library’s Elf on the Library Shelf! Cocoa will be helping with library activities, work, and more. But as usual, he’ll probably be up to a little mischief. Carleton Place also knows kids love crafts, so they will be holding their first **Christmas Crafternoon Drop-In** on Tuesday, December 12 from 1:30–3:30PM, for ages 3 and up.

For those looking for some holiday treats, the Smiths Fall Public Library will be hosting their 4th annual **Christmas Cookie Exchange** on Decem-

ber 6 at 6PM. Register at the library or give them a shout at 283–2911. Celebrate at the Lanark Highlands Public Library with a **kids’ holiday party** featuring crafts, activities, and stories on Saturday, December 16 from 12:30–2PM. The Renfrew Public Library also kicks off the holiday season with an **evening of music**, good cheer, and hot beverages on Friday, December 1 at 6:30PM, while the Arnprior Public Library hosts a fun-filled family morning of **stories and crafts** on Saturday, December 9 at 10:30AM — register at 623–2279.

We look forward to seeing you at the library!

Holiday Reading Suggestions

For kids:

- *Llama Llama Holiday Drama* by Anna Dewdney
- *The Latke Who Couldn’t Stop Screaming: a Christmas Story* by Lemony Snicket
- *Lighting Our World: A Year of Celebrations* by Catherine Rondina
- *The Long Winter* by Laura Ingalls Wilder

For teens:

- *My True Love Gave to Me: Twelve Holiday Stories* edited by Stephanie Perkins
- *Brian’s Winter* by Gary Paulsen

For adults:

- *Hercule Poirot’s Christmas* by Agatha Christie
- *I Am Half-Sick of Shadows* (Flavia de Luce #4) by Alan Bradley
- *The Man Who Invented Christmas: How Charles Dickens’s A Christmas Carol Rescued his Career and Revived our Holiday Spirits* by Les Standiford
- *Winter Harvest Handbook: Year-Round Organic Vegetable Production Using Deep-Organic Techniques and Unheated Greenhouses* by Eliot Coleman

—Erika Heesen is the CEO/Chief Librarian at the Perth & District Union Public Library



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Play of Light: Jay Li Paintings at General Fine Craft

For several years, General Fine Craft has been showing Jay Li's distinctive oil paintings of antique typewriters, sewing machines and cameras. They often elicit a feeling of nostalgia for viewers, but have an additional meaning: representing the tools people use to create and make things. In effect, Jay is paying homage to the creative urge he knows so well.

With every type of subject matter Jay chooses to paint — landscape, architecture, portrait, nude or still life — there is a sense of freedom in how he applies paint to canvas. To start, he breaks down a scene in technical, abstract terms: shapes, lines, colours and tones. Then he paints gesturally and joyfully to give an impression of the image. This is a style derived from his familiarity with both Eastern and Western art forms.

Born and raised in Canton Province, Jay studied the finest examples of Chinese art traditions. His

growing interest in Western art led him to Greece, the birthplace of classical art. From there he visited many of the great art museums of Europe, discovering for himself the masterworks he'd otherwise only seen in textbooks.

After nine years in Europe, he had gained a passionate understanding of how representational painting in the West is often about creating the feeling of space, openness and depth. He was especially drawn to the French Impressionists and the "mood landscape" school in Russia. When he moved to Canada in 1998, he found a new sense of creative freedom. Intrigued by the Group of Seven and American Abstract Expressionism, he began experimenting outside of traditional realism.

At Jay's studio in Carleton Place, a variety of oil paintings feature his recent favourite subject: local landscapes and interiors with a distinctive sense of



Find works by Jay Li and many other artists at General Fine Craft

space and light. Hence the apt title of his current show at General Fine Craft: *Play of Light*.

One of the magical appeals of his work is how he achieves mood. It may be in the spectacle of nature's colourful transition in autumn, the way light filters through a gridwork of windows, or the tonalities of grey in a winter landscape. Using his brushes with both looseness and control, he goes beyond what the naked eye can see — and is able to depict an atmosphere.

This makes Jay a sort of visual translator, an impressionistic storyteller. He has the ability to describe how there is beauty in everything around us: a fall day, a decaying building, a long-forgotten typewriter.

Play of Light continues until December 31 at General Fine Craft, located at 63 Mill Street in Almonte. Oil paintings on canvas range in size from 10" x 10" to 36" x 48". The retrospective catalogue *Jay Zhijian Li Fine Art* is also available in the gallery.

See all gallery artists' portfolios at <generalfinecraft.com>.

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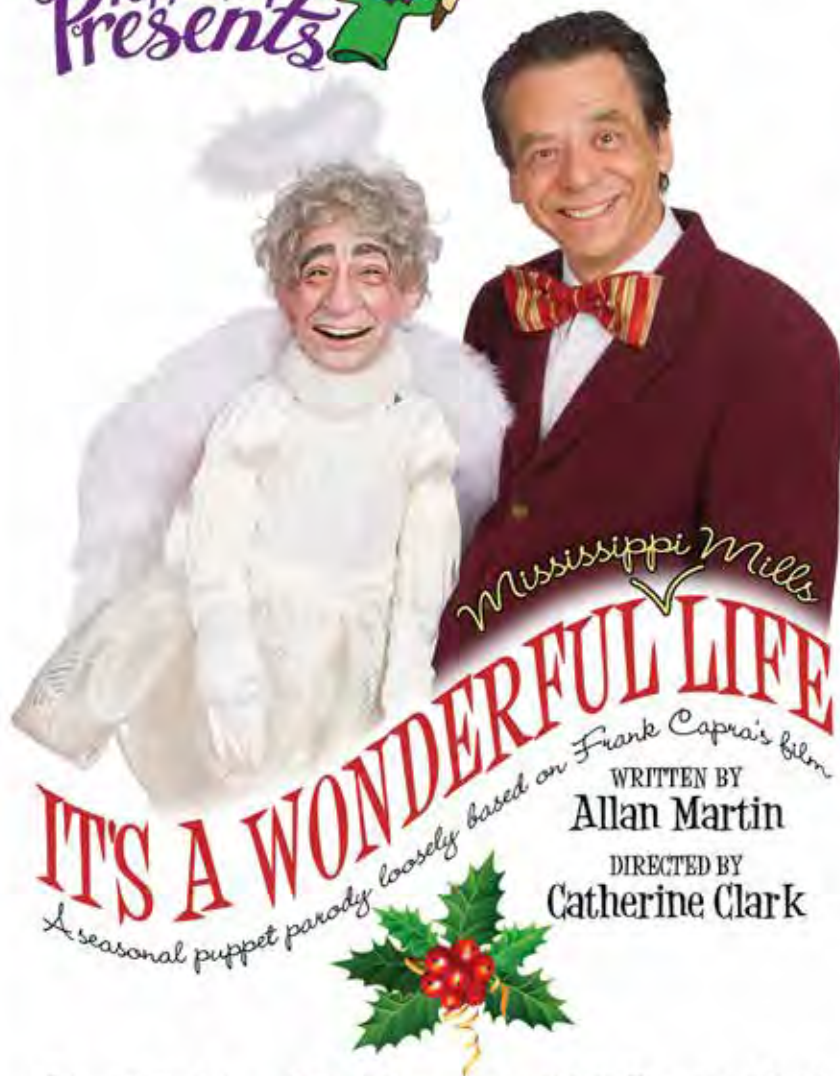
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It's the Most Musical Time of the Year

It used to be simple. You would head out gift shopping for Christmas and, inevitably, you would pick up a couple of CDs for friends and family (and maybe one or two for yourself). In the last

by Rob Riendeau



Joey Wright's new album *Country, Music* features a slew of talented musicians including Amy Millan, Jenny Whitely, Evan Cranley, and Pat McGee from the band Stars. This album is a departure from his usual fast-paced, bluegrass instrumentals. It's much more laid back and the songs have a depth and soul that is truly captivating. And take note, you can get *Country, Music* on vinyl from <joeywrightmusic.com>.

couple of years, the way we get music has changed considerably. Although we are listening to more music than ever, we are purchasing fewer and fewer pressings from musicians. Music services like Spotify and Apple Music are now filling our ears with songs and artists are trying to figure out how to make a living in this brave new world. So, for my column this month, I'd like to encourage local music fans to think about the musicians they know and love and think about how to give them a gift this season.

Here's a simple one: stream their songs. If you have a music streaming account, you have access to a world of music — a world that includes our little corner. Add some local to your playlists. It might only generate a fraction of a fraction of a cent for the artist, but every little bit helps. Start with **Brock Zeman, Jimmy Tri-Tone Band**, and **Red Heaven** and then expand from there.

Tunes Under the Tree

Of course, plenty of people still listen to music on CD (or heck, even vinyl!). For those folks, you have several excellent choices of local releases.



Although she has moved into the big city of Ottawa, **Kellylee Evans** will always have a home here in Humm-country (after all, she is a Mississippi Mudds alumna). Her latest CD, *Come On*, is an energetic mix of jazz, soul and groove that I think will appeal to a wide variety of listeners. Highly recommended! Find it at <kellyleeevans.com>.

Guitar-slinger **Brad Scott** (or Bradley D. Scott on Spotify) has been impressing audiences all over the area with his instrumental virtuosity and soulful voice. His 2017 release, *New Frontier*, is a confident, country-influenced album that will appeal to anyone who likes six-string fireworks, warm vocals, and excellent songwriting. Order a copy (or three!) at <bradscott.ca>.



Almonte musician Joel Tamas is the prime mover and shaker in the band **Red Heaven** and, in October, they released a very cool album called *200 Years*. The album is a collection of original music written to mark the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh, founder of the Bahá'í Faith. The lyrics are inspired and influenced by Bahá'u'lláh's teachings about world unity, justice, and an ever-evolving world society. But even non-Bahá'ís will enjoy the blend of rock and World music influences. It's available for download (pay-what-you-like) at <redheavenlive.bandcamp.com/album/200-years>.

The Real Thing

Of course, nothing beats the real thing. Seeing a band in concert is good for you and the musicians. My recommendation for this busy month is to catch the **Somerset Combo's** jazz night. Ric Denis on guitar and Tony Stuart on clarinet are a delightful duo and they play every other Friday night at Chesswood in Carleton Place from 9 to midnight. This month's shows are on December 1 and 15. Jazz standards and jazzy takes on well-known tunes while you sip a glass of wine... sounds pretty good to me!

One other show that really intrigues me is **Sam Steel and the Mass of Humanity's** gig at Valley Food & Drink Co. in Calabogie on December 9. According to the

good folks at VFDC: "this band isn't one to miss. Sam may be small but her voice is larger than life. We can't wait for this show!" There's no cover, and the music gets underway at 8PM.

As an early Christmas present to yourself (and whoever you want to bring along), on December 21, head to Slackoni's in Perth to hear the **Peter Brown Trio** — Peter Brown, piano and vocals; Glenn Robb, drums; Peter Newsom, bass. This trio is the next evolutionary step from the quartet that played to packed houses in Carleton Place for several years. They have found a new home at Slackoni's and these veterans of jazz continue to entrance audiences. The music goes from 6 to 9 and there is no cover.

New Year's Eve Options

There are plenty of options for live music on the last night of 2017. In Westport, **Turpin's Trail** is back with their East Coast folk for a New Year's Eve celebration that is always a great night at The Cove. In Perth, **Jimmy Tri-Tone** will be rocking in the New Year at the Golden Arrow Pub. Meanwhile, **The Brockolees** will be brocking in the New Year at Farrell Hall.



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Humm Bits

Gifts of Light Gift & Bake Sale

L'Arche Arnprior sponsors a sale of one-of-a-kind Christmas items and homemade baking and preserves each year at The Kirkman Bed and Breakfast, 294 John Street North in Arnprior. Come on out to the Gifts of Light Christmas Gift & Bake Sale on Saturday, December 2 from 10AM to 2PM. The wares of local vendors are also featured in this gracious old home, which has been beautifully decorated for the season. L'Arche holds the sale at this time of year in celebration of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, December 3. Come out to Arnprior to enjoy the lovely venue, browse their offerings and find a few items to brighten your holidays! For more information, find L'Arche Arnprior on Facebook.

Lanark County Memorial Service

On Sunday, December 3, Community Home Support Lanark County and Hub Hospice Palliative Care are presenting a Lanark County Memorial Service. It will take place from 5-7PM at Community Home Support, located at 5 Bates Drive in Carleton Place. Anyone grieving the death of a loved one is welcome. Lorrie Beaton, Bereavement Counsellor, will give a presentation entitled "Getting Through the Holidays", which will be followed by a Candlelight Ceremony to honour those who have died. Photos and memorial items are welcome. There will also be refreshments and a resource table. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to <rebeccab@chslc.ca>.

Sing-in the Season with the CP Community Band

For the seventh year in a row, the Carleton Place and District Community Band will give a musical Christmas gift to the community. The Band will present "Sing-in the Season" on Sunday, December 10 at 2PM at Zion-Memorial United Church in Carleton Place, as a fundraiser for the Food Bank.

This is always an enjoyable way to spend an hour or so on a Sunday afternoon before Christmas. Come, relax and listen to the band play such tunes as *White Christmas*, *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* and the *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel's *Messiah*. And you can join the band and sing familiar seasonal songs such as *Jingle Bells* and *Joy to the World*.

This is a free presentation — there is no admission, but a contribution to the Food Bank (either a can or cash) would be most welcome. That way everyone can share in the gift. Come and bring your family and neighbours — the band would love to see you.

The band would also like to thank Zion-Memorial United Church for their gift of providing the concert space at no charge. Zion-Memorial is located at 37 Franklin Street in Carleton Place. For more information about the concert, call or text Louise at 298-3953.

Calling All Guys and Dolls in the Area!

Come on out to the Carleton Place Town Hall on January 6 to audition for a part in this phenomenal classic show! The Mississippi Mudds are looking for performers aged 16 and up to play leads and ensemble roles. You must pick a song of your choice from the musical, perform a small read-through of the part you are auditioning for, and perform a few dance steps with one of the choreographers. For more information and to book a time slot, contact Karen Lapointe at <kazli63@gmail.com>. Performances are scheduled for May 11 to 19. To find out more about this and other Mudds productions, visit <mississippimudds.ca>.

Old Time Christmas!

Renowned Canadian Fiddle Champion Scott Woods and his band present Old Time Christmas! This uplifting 2-hour live show celebrates the Christmas season with the sweet harmonies of Twin Fiddles, and lots of traditional Christmas music, traditional country, western swing, country gospel and old-time fiddle tunes. Enjoy sensational step dancing, wholesome family humour and Scott's famous trick fiddling — somersaults and walking on a barrel, all while playing his fiddle!

The show takes place on Friday, December 15 at 7PM at the Carleton Place Arena (75 Neelin Street), and supports Canadian charities. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$10 for children (age 6-12); children 5 and under get in free. Advance tickets are on sale at SRC Music in Carleton Place, Baker Bob's in Almonte, Mark's Cobbler in Perth, Nicholson's in Pakenham, and the General Store in Clayton. You can also call Ray and Kathy at 256-9010 or toll free 1-855-SCOTTWOODS (1-855-726-8896) to charge by phone. See <scottwoods.ca> for a complete tour schedule.

Candlelit Advent Carol Service

The short season of Advent marks the start of the church year, and St. James' Anglican Church in Perth celebrates Advent Sunday on December 3 with a Candlelit Carol Service at 4PM. It starts in pitch darkness as the choir and clergy process around the church carrying candles so they can sing and read the scriptures as they go. The lights come on gradually to symbolize the coming of Christ, and by the time the procession reaches the front of the church, all the lights are on.

This year the **Tay River Brass Quartet** returns to play the prelude and postlude. "Their two trombones and two trumpets resound particularly well in the friendly acoustic of St. James," says Peter Woodwark, St. James' Musical Director. "The Liturgical Choir will

be singing music drawn from across the thousand years of church music, including plainsong, Renaissance polyphony, and 20th century harmony."

New anthems this year include *The Cherry Tree Carol*, one of the most popular carols in England in the 19th century. This was originally a medieval carol in three parts, with three different tunes. The choir will sing only the first part in a delightful choral arrangement by Stephen Cleobury, long-time Director of Music for the Choir of King's College, Cambridge.

St. James' Church is located on the corner of Drummond and Harvey Streets in Perth. Travelling west on Highway 7, turn left at the first traffic light as you enter Perth. For more information, contact the church office at 267-1163 or email <stjamesperth@gmail.com>.

The Great Eclipse and Other Wonders

This is the story of a month-long road trip undertaken in order to witness the total solar eclipse on the 21st of August, 2017 — a mission accomplished, in spectacular fashion!

En route, many of the natural (and a few human-made) wonders of the mid- and northwestern United States were encountered, including Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, Devils Tower, Mount Rushmore, Craters of the Moon National Monument, vistas along Pacific Coast

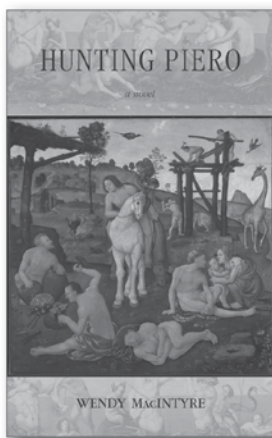
Highway 101, the wines of the Willamette Valley in Oregon, Crater Lake National Park, and the Badlands of South Dakota.

Rick Scholes will be sharing his experience at the Mississippi Mills Public Library, in the Almonte Branch meeting room on Thursday, December 7 at 7PM. This is a free event.

For more information, or if you would be willing to host a future travelogue, please contact K. Pillsworth at 624-5306 or <kpillsworth@mississippimills.ca>.

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Hunting Piero – A New Novel by Wendy MacIntyre

When I received a copy of *Hunting Piero* in the mail, the first thing I noted was that it was written by a resident of Carleton Place. Wondering what a (new to me) local author had chosen to write about, I was fascinated to learn that the novel is "...a haunting adventure that intertwines the lives of legendary Renaissance painter Piero di Cosimo and two

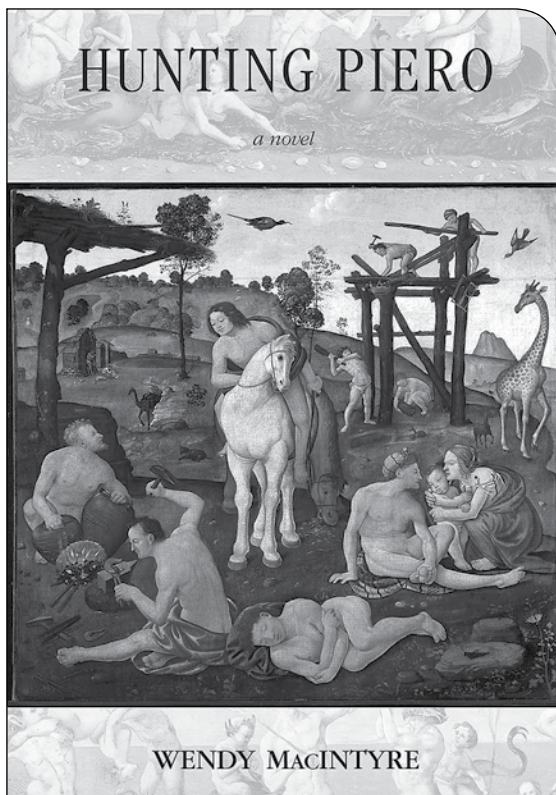
by Kris Riendeau

young animal rights activists whose protests go fatally wrong." Suffice it to say that I was intrigued! 526 captivating pages later (and after viewing several of di Cosimo's paintings on the internet), I have become more familiar with his life and art, but I was still curious as to what drew author Wendy MacIntyre to this subject matter. Fortunately, she was happy to answer my questions!

theHummm: Where did you first encounter di Cosimo's work, and what about it — or about him — motivated you to make him one of the subjects of this novel?

Wendy MacIntyre: I first became aware of Piero di Cosimo in my university days through the American poet, Robert Duncan. In his poem, *The Fire*, he described the scene of di Cosimo's magnificent painting, *The Forest Fire*, with hundreds of animals and birds fleeing their burning home, including a wild boar with a human face who shows a "philosophic sorrow."

That description led me to seek out a reproduction of the painting and I was captivated by the diverse company of animals and birds in the foreground, and the wide range of emotions they show: a pacing, agitated lion and an anxious mother bear, for example. They are all so highly individualized, and the boar and the deer, who have human faces, are a visual shock, surreal. Some of the animals appear to be speaking, as if they have an urgent message to pass on to us.



Hunting Piero is the latest novel by Carleton Place author Wendy MacIntyre (pictured below)

The mysteries of that painting, and its beauty, stayed with me and I think I knew from that point that I wanted to write about di Cosimo. The more I looked at the sensitive depictions of animals in his paintings, the more certain I became that he saw the animal kingdom as a source of profound joy, and that his work seems to urge us toward a respectful relationship with other creature life, where we look at animals with wonder, rather than seeing them as objects for our use.

As the two young modern protagonists participate in their 21st century lives and struggles, one of them also engages in "hunting" Piero di Cosimo, who lived and painted near the end of the fifteenth century. What were some of the challenges of writing in two different temporal settings?

Moving between the 15th and the 21st century was really just a question of imaginatively inhabiting the particular character, and his or her time. So if it was Piero in 1495, I would research what was happening in Florence that year, and return again and again to the details of the paintings, to enter his world. I find long walks help open a channel for listening to your characters and making these imaginative shifts.

Your protagonists are at a fairly tumultuous stage in their lives, as they enter college and begin to experience the world as young adults. Your depiction of both their internal turmoil and

their sometimes awkward interactions with others are so honest and poignant that they transported me right back to my youth. Why did you choose to write about that formative age, and what helped you to convey it so accurately?

Agnes was the first of my contemporary characters who came to me. I knew from the very beginning that she was both young and vulnerable, an outsider. So in a sense, she was a given — a gift from the unconscious. And I was drawn to a group of young characters who are outraged by a wrong they see happening everywhere, from factory farms to medical laboratories, but are still naive enough to believe they can end animals' suffering easily, even magically, through the perfect activist protest. They are so impressionable themselves, they believe it will be a simple matter to make others feel equally passionate about animals' rights and bring about this major moral change worldwide.

I drew on my own adolescence, and feelings of alienation and social awkwardness, for Agnes's and Pinto's characters.

You approach the theme of animal rights from several angles in this novel, yet you are never pedantic. In fact, the tactics of some characters occasionally result in situations that are antithetical to their motives. Why did you choose to address this topic with some ambiguity?

I didn't consciously plan that the group's protest would have such terrible consequences. That was just the way the story evolved, as it took shape. But despite their failure, they all stay true to their conviction that, as a species, we must try to end animal suffering, however and wherever we can.

Where is your book available locally, and how can our readers find out more about you and your writing?

Hunting Piero is available at Mill Street Books, and there is more about me and my writing on my website <wendymacintyreauthor.ca>. I'll be giving a reading at the Carleton Place Public Library on December 14 at 7PM.

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United Way 2017 Campaign

Recently, the legal firm of Woodward Stevens Ireton in Perth, longtime supporters of United Way Lanark County, made a generous donation of \$1,000 to the United Way towards their 30th annual Fundraising Campaign 2017. Making the cheque presentation were Katie Ireton and Mark Fendley, along with staff members of the firm. Accepting the donation was Amy Elsner, the Community Partnership Development Officer with the United Way. As part of their donation, Woodward Stevens Ireton issued a county-wide challenge for all other lawyers and law firms in Lanark County to meet or exceed their donation.

For more information on how to support the United Way's 100% Local Campaign, please go to <lanarkunitedway.com> or call 253-9074.

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Planting the Seed

Indigenous Agriculture

Gardening lore paints a rosy portrait of the historical gardening practices of our indigenous people featuring the “three sisters” — sustainable patches of corn, beans and squash, with a fish buried for additional nutrients. Our Canadian Agricultural Museum has even named the educational hall in a recently renovated building on the Central Experimental Farm the Three Sisters Hall. It is a beautiful space and has been acclaimed as one of the top ten unique meeting spaces in Ottawa.

by David Hinks

Many years ago I tried this approach and ended up with a horrible tangled mess. When I tried to pick the beans and the corn I stepped on the squash plants, and it was difficult to find the beans amongst the corn and the prickly squash vines. In hindsight it appears I made a few wrong assumptions. Rather than planting sweet corn and beans for picking fresh, it works a whole lot better if corn and bean varieties are chosen that are allowed to reach full maturity and that are then picked and stored as dry beans and corn. The prickly vines and leaves of the squash plants act as a deterrent to wildlife such as deer as well as to humans! Also, from the perspective of good neighbours, the nutrient requirements are different — corn needs lots of nitrogen while beans grab nitrogen from the atmosphere.

So is this a realistic picture of indigenous agriculture?

I started doing a little digging and of course found out that the reality is much more complicated!

My starting point was Plenty Canada, which is a local non-profit organization that I first encountered as a partner in the Reconciliation event that took place this summer on the grounds of St. Paul's Church in Almonte. The goal of that event was to learn together about how our indigenous neighbours are moving forward, and how we can walk with them respectfully.

Located near Lanark Village, Plenty Canada was founded several decades ago with a focus on international development. While still involved with international projects, much of the focus has shifted to sharing indigenous knowledge that can help create a world that is economically, environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable.

Plenty Canada facilitates access to and shares resources with indigenous peoples and other community groups around the world, in support of their environmental protection and sustainable development goals.

But let's get back to food security. What I have learned is that indigenous knowledge about food security is incredibly complicated and regionally

diverse — depending on climate and other resources. The “three sisters” concept was more apt to be a model for agriculture in southwestern Ontario. While indigenous people in our region collected and ate a large number of berries, nuts and other plants, I was surprised to learn that wild rice was also a very important food staple.

Wild rice is Canada's only native cereal. It is a wild grass that grows from seed annually, producing a very valuable grain that has been used as food for thousands of years. The natural rice bowl extends over an area west of Lake Superior to Southern Manitoba, Ontario and into adjacent states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. Many lakes and rivers have received their names from the presence of wild rice within them; the best known is Rice Lake in Ontario, part of the Trent-Severn Waterway.



The plants grow in shallow water in small lakes and slow-flowing streams; often, only the flowering head of wild rice rises above the water. The grain is eaten by dabbling ducks (such as mallards) and other aquatic wildlife, as well as by humans. It is often harvested by canoeing into a stand of plants, bending the ripe grain heads over the canoe and threshing the grain by beating it with wooden sticks. Some seeds are allowed to fall into the water to become next year's plants.

Plenty Canada has been working on an initiative that helps to replenish and monitor the growth of wild rice in our area in collaboration with Environment Canada's National Wetland Conservation Fund. In the fall of 2014, Plenty Canada seeded rice along the Mississippi River at McCulloch's Mud Lake, just outside of Lanark, as well as in Rice Lake in Alderville. Current work on this project involves monitoring the growth conditions of the rice, as well as monitoring and assessing the overall health of the wetland habitats that the rice supports.

What's next? I have a few ideas about how some of our local gardening/beautification projects might include a nod to some of the staples of indigenous agriculture. More about that next month!

To find out more about Plenty Canada, their website <plentycanada.com> is certainly well worth a visit. We are very fortunate to have this local organization so accessible. Plenty Canada's Larry McDermott notes that they are committed to engaging people about issues of living on the Earth on the basis of indigenous teachings. They do host visitors and groups — contact them for more information.

Gifts for Art Lovers

Salon of the Masters sculpted wall plaques by Richard Gill, Bittersweet...\$400-950
Hand-blown glass balls (4" diameter), Chris Van Zanten.....\$25
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Etchings by Franc van Oort, Riverguild Fine Crafts.....\$75-200
Oil paintings and prints of all sizes, Almonte Antiques & Collectibles.....\$10-300
Works by regional and Canadian artists, Sivarulrasa Gallery.....various
First Nations prints, That's The Spirit.....\$28

So Much Merriment in Miss Mills!

"It's beginning to look a lot... like... puppets..."
 Ok, ok — *and* Christmas! It has been a while since I've made a public appearance, so you could be forgiven for forgetting that this here column is written by a puppet, and you can, in turn, forgive *me* if I get a little excited when my puppet pals come to town.

So. The busiest month of the year, eh? What you need, my friends, is a plan. And I am here to help. Think weekday organization and weekend celebrations!



Wayne Rostad and Mrs. Claus kick off a very busy month in Almonte & Pakenham — full of terrific family (and adult) events, shopping, and lots more!

by Miss Mills, Puppet Reporter

The first weekend begins with the annual **Light Up the Night** festivities (December 1, 7PM). My pal Rudolph (the puppet) tells me Mrs. Claus (also a puppet) has been fussing over her wardrobe for weeks, excited that Wayne Rostad will be back as host. Whatever the weather, this is an event not to be missed; the locals gather in the town centre like Whos in Whoville, young and old sing along with *Christmas in the Valley*, and all will ooh and ah during the fantastic fireworks finale. Add a **Santa Claus Parade** or two (Pakenham on December 2, 1PM; Almonte on December 3, 5PM) for the Mississippi Mills Christmas Hat Trick.

Now that you're in the Christmas spirit, it's time for celebration and local shopping!

Art lovers will want to check out the incredible works at both **Sivarulrasa Gallery** (paintings and sculpture, with a 3rd Anniversary Show vernissage on the 2nd, 3–6PM) and **General Fine Craft** (ceramics, glass, paintings, featuring Jay Li's oils).

Mid-week (December 6 to be exact) shop for the musicians on your list at the **Musicworks** Grand Opening (6–8PM), and refuel with coffee and music at **Equator's** open house (6–9PM).

Weekend 2: family outing day! Get the fam in the car on Saturday, December 9, and head to the **Almonte Farmers' Christmas Market** (arena, 9AM–3PM). It's a great place to pick up some hostess

gifts and a snack — heck, get the kids hopped up on sugar, because next it's off to relax in the comfortable old-timey surroundings of the Mill of Kintail for a **Kintail Country Christmas** (11AM–3PM). Entry is \$10 per vehicle, but the beauty and peace of the trails are priceless. There are plenty of activities there for the kids, with crafts, a kids-only gift shop, wagon rides and, of course, running around insanely like kids are wont to do, especially after sugaring up! Finish the day where Christmas was born! Well, where Christmas *trees* are born: **Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm**. You can cut down a tree (or buy pre-cut), select a wreath or centrepiece made of fresh Fraser Fir, and, whether your craving is savoury or sweet, veggie or meat, gluten-free or wheat, you can dine at Café Claus. If you visit them on Sundays (December 3, 10, 17), you can meet Santa (12–2PM) and take a horse-drawn wagon ride (10AM–3PM, \$3).

On Sunday the 10th, take the opportunity to check out some of the new shops in downtown Almonte. Did you know that Keepsakes is changing its name to **Cashmere and Rose**? Well, as their new tagline says, "Without change there would be no butterflies!" And did you know there is a new designer clothing store in town? **Mill Street Fashions** carries lines

from Italy and Montreal; they opened November 18 at the back of the Victoria Woollen Mill (i.e. behind Heirloom Café). **Booo Clothing** has been open a few months, but maybe, like me, you've been too scared to go in? Don't worry — I am assured they carry bamboo clothing and sheets, and that it is nothing to do with ghosts. **Classic Country Charm** and **Threadwork** are also relatively new, and not at all scary either, so you'd better check them out for more distinctly Almonte gifts. If your wallet's feeling a bit empty or you simply want environmental presents, peruse the gently used items of **The Hub**, now located within Rebound at 14 Industrial Drive. That evening, relax at the **Valley Voices** Christmas Concert, with the Bells of St. Paul's, at the Almonte United Church (7PM).

Weekend 3 is, spoiler alert, "Puppet Weekend", so plan ahead! Last year, Puppets Up Presents performed their version of *A Christmas Carol*, peopled with their famous look-alike puppets (resembling many local people) and actor David Frisch, to rave reviews. Buy your tickets early, as *It's a Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life*, their no-doubt warped and locally-spun take on the Frank Capra classic, will likely sell out. Please note that this show is not recommended for kids, no doubt due to some dirty jokes, but is very recommended for adults. Find more details on page 17.

Other than the puppets, you have time for more downtown shopping. On Saturday (December 16), make sure to drop by **That's The Spirit** (previously Soul Scents) for their Customer Appreciation Party! Deals, giveaways, snacks — what more could you want?

Weekend 4 is for all you last-minuters, because Christmas is Monday! For the hard-to-buy-for folks left on your list, how about picking up some specialty foods? Because be they old, young, travellers, couch potatoes, trendy or oblivious... they gotta eat! Get preserves and chocolate at **Pêches et Poivre**, pie and vintage candies at **Baker Bob's**, gluten-free and environmental everything at **Dandelion Foods**, coffee beans at **Equator** or **Palms**, more chocolate at **Hummingbird**, some local honey or maple syrup... Oh! And did you pick up your turkey at **Don's Meat Market** or **Dandelion**? Ok! You are ready for Christmas!

Weekend 5. Yes, like you weren't busy enough, they've stuck an extra weekend in December. You need to plan ahead for this. Buy your tickets now for the **Rag Bag Cabaret** (December 30, see page 4 for details), and the Almonte **Civitan's New Years Eve Dinner/Dance**: the chicken meal sounds delicious (cranberries, apples, brie, maple cream) and then dance to Limit's old/new country and classic rock.

And... I'm... spent! Here's hoping you have a great December, filled with just enough festivities!

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A Christmas Celebration in Pakenham

On Friday, December 22, everyone is invited to St. Andrew's United Church in Pakenham at 7PM to experience **A Christmas Celebration in Story and Song**. This annual event has become a favourite for those wishing to be filled with the holiday spirit. The concert features seasonal favourites and interesting stories about the songs being performed. Lisa Webber, Mike McCormick and James Hrkach are talented local musicians who have wide-ranging experience in music, theatre and education.

Lisa is a voice teacher, choral conductor, professional mezzo-soprano and founder of the Arnprior Summer Music Camps, the Arnprior Community Choir, Two Rivers Musical Productions, the Ottawa Valley Girls Choir, and an exciting ladies' ensemble called Tutti.

James is an artist and educator who works from his Studio for the Arts located between Arnprior and Pakenham. For over four decades, James has been an active supporter and participant in the local arts community through music, theatre and visual art events.

And Mike is a founding member of The Arrogant Worms (Canada's favourite musical comedy troupe), and is a fixture on the area arts scene at the Neat Café, Dragonfly Golf Links and Trinity-St. Andrews United Church.



(l-r) James Hrkach, Lisa Webber and Mike McCormick will bring stories and songs to St. Andrew's Church in Pakenham on December 22

Come for an entertaining evening of beautiful music, great stories and fun. Admission is a freewill offering, and for more information you can email <mike@mikemccormick.ca>.

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Gifts for Coffee & Tea Lovers

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Nine Lessons & Carols

St. James the Apostle Anglican Church
12 Harvey Street, Perth ~ 613-267-1163 ~ stjamesperth.ca

Sunday, December 17, 7:30 p.m.
Combined Choirs of
St. James' & St. Paul's United Church

Find *Aladdin* at the Station Theatre

It's not too early to start thinking about Christmas and the holiday season. We at the Station Theatre think the best possible present for kids (or adults who wannabe kids) is a ticket for the pantomime *Aladdin*.

The Theatre is quickly becoming known for its pantos, and *Aladdin* is a fun one with spectacular costumes, witty dialogue and lots of action.

The cast has been in rehearsal mode for several weeks now, with Emily Duberville taking on the familiar role of directing, and her dad, Mike Adams, taking on his familiar role as the... well, the "Dame" Widow Twankey. "This is the fifth time I've played the Dame, which is probably my favourite role in a pantomime," he says, adding, with a grin, that he's getting a bit long-in-the-tooth "to play the young prince."

Pantomimes have a long theatrical history. Victorian times usually cast a male as the dame. The character is a parody, says Adams, "of mums of old." He describes Widow Twankey as a bumbler who is somewhat naive and "gets herself into difficult and unlikely situations." She dresses in garish outfits,

wears hideous hats and makeup, and is usually on the lookout for a new husband in the cast or the audience.

Aladdin is a traditional British pantomime. Pantos are usually performed at Christmas, incorporating song, dance, buffoonery, and lots of audience participation. They are usually loosely based on a well-known fairy tale or folk tale. In this case, Aladdin lives in Old Peking with his mother, as well as a laundry boy named Wishee Washee and a panda named Po Po. With much slapstick comedy and "pun", Aladdin sneaks a glimpse of the imperial princess Jasmine and is only saved by the timely intervention of his "uncle" Abanazar — who may not be all that he appears.

Kids love the tomfoolery, the costumes, the interaction between audience and actors. The show runs December 8 at 7:30PM, December 9 and 10 at 2PM, and the following Thursday and Friday (December 14 and 15) at 7:30, finishing on December 16 and 17 with shows at 2PM.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students (with ID), and are on sale now at Special Greetings



Wishee Washee (Lucas Tennant) and PoPo the Panda (Maya Gordon) go at each other in the Station Theatre's annual Panto. Come and see *Aladdin* in December for lots of laughs and audience participation!

Gifts for Parents

Premium ice grippers (free for folks 65 & older), Get A Grip	\$25
Autumn fantasy maple tree, Hub Hospice Tree Sale	\$71.50
Wind chimes, Reid Gardens	\$70

(8 Russell Street, E., cash only), online at <smithsfallstheatre.com> (PayPal/Visa/MasterCard), by phone at 283-0300 (Visa/MasterCard), and at the door, if available, a half-hour before performance (cash only).

Finally, coming down the track on December 22, just three days before Christmas, settle in for **Cadence** — four men, four microphones, no instruments. This a cappella ensemble has been wowing audiences since 1998. Whether performing at jazz clubs, concert halls or music festivals, the members of Cadence bring an energy to every song they sing. On-stage antics and audience participation are par for the course. So, too, is their musical genius. What these guys can do with their voices needs to be heard to be believed.

Tickets for Cadence are \$30 and available at the above locations. Find the Theatre at 53 Victoria Avenue, Smiths Falls. Regular hours are Monday to Friday, 9 to 12.

— Sally Smith

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Nine Lessons & Carols

What is Christmas all about? Find out by coming to the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at St. James the Apostle Anglican Church in Perth on Sunday, December 17 at 7:30PM. The combined Adult and Junior Choirs from St. Paul's United Church and St. James will be leading the singing of hymns and carols. The Nine Lessons are scripture readings that show the Christmas story starts a long time before Jesus Christ was born.

The two adult choirs have been singing together at this service for 35 years, under the direction of Brad Mills from St. Paul's and Peter Woodwark from St. James, and they are joined this year by the pure voices of the Juniors, directed by Val Leavitt and Rebecca Warden. "It is a true Christmas treat to hear the combined junior choirs," says Peter.

Peter and Brad select music from the choirs' large repertoire of Christmas music, combining perennial favourites, excerpts from previous concerts, carols

sung in previous years, and brand-new ones — this year they will perform Evelyn Larter's take on *Silent Night*. The congregation has plenty of opportunities to join in singing Christmas hymns, including *The First Nowell* in a delightful arrangement by Paul Halley, Director of Music at King's College, Halifax.

The service starts with a junior soloist — by tradition selected just days before the service — singing the first verse of *Once in Royal David's City* with choir and congregation joining in on the other verses as the choir processes down the church. "The children will be singing two carols at the beginning of the service," says Val — *Each Child* by Eleanor Daly and *Some Children See Him* by Alfred Burt.

The first lesson is the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, and the adult choirs sing a ballad from this year's spring concert at St. Paul's, *The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass* by Carol Barnett:



Photo by Henry Lane

All are welcome to St. James' in Perth on December 17

*Adam he laboured, Eve she toiled
And many children bore
And sometimes all was fruitfulness...
and sometimes hunger at the door.
They say God loved the world so dear
He set aside his crown
And cloaked himself in human shape;
They say that he came down
and dwelt awhile amongst us here.*

Other lessons from the Hebrew Scriptures follow, accompanied by two selections from Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, and then the focus shifts to the New Testament and the story of Mary's conception and Jesus' birth. *Ave Maria* by Franz Biebl is a hymn of praise, and *Mary Did You Know* is by Mark Lowry who, in a sparkling pop style popularized by Pentatonix, speculates on her thoughts as a mother cuddling her baby boy. The service ends with everyone joining in *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* with the sopranos singing the haunting descant composed by Mendelssohn.

All are welcome to this glorious service, and are also invited to St. James' **Candlelight Advent Carol Service** on Sunday, December 3 at 4PM, and a new **Epiphany Carol Service** on January 21 at 4PM.

St. James' Church is located on the corner of Drummond and Harvey Streets in Perth. Travelling west on Highway 7, turn left at the first traffic light as you enter Perth. For more information, contact the church office at 267-1163 or email the church at <stjamesperth@gmail.com>. — Hilary Barrett

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Amazing Costumes Make Puppets Up Play Come Alive!

Ingrid Hamster Harris makes costumes for live actors and puppets, and she can see the upside to working with both. “When you have live actors, you can work with them,” she says. “But when there are puppets, I’m the only decision-maker.”

These days, she’s generally the only decision-maker as she prepares 45 puppets (and one live actor) for the Puppets Up! presentation of *It’s a Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life*, a retelling of the beloved 1946 film *It’s a Wonderful Life*. The show runs from December 15–17 at the Almonte Old Town Hall.

Ingrid started work in mid-October, dressing the puppets who will show George Bailey (actor David Frisch) what the world would have been like if he’d never been born. Some of the puppet characters are based on characters from the movie, but many are



Mary (Sharon Sonnenburg’s puppet) in outdoor garb

familiar faces, like mayors and business owners from Almonte, who become part of the story.

She said she gets a kick out of doing this show, which is becoming an annual event. (Last year’s production was a puppet version of *A Christmas Carol*.)

“I’ve been in this town for 35 years, and we all know one another,” she explains. “With these shows we are teasing one another a little bit, and I like that.”

Ingrid grew up in the Netherlands and went to the United States in the late 1970s as a costume designer. “I was pretty bold,” she recalls. “I went to Hollywood and said, ‘Give me some work.’ But it wasn’t that simple because I was one of 150 people waiting to get a turn. So I took a detour to Canada, and never went back to California.”

She found work in Toronto — with input in 36 different productions — then in Ottawa at the National Arts Centre, and decided to split the difference by living in Almonte. “Once you make your home somewhere, that’s just it,” she said. “And that’s Canada.”

To create the costumes for the puppets, Ingrid said she starts by drawing a design based on the character’s traits. So the Sam Wainwright puppet (he’s the wealthy womanizer who bails out George Bailey in the end) is dressed for success. Violet, who’s a friend of George’s wife Mary, is a bit flirt, “so I dressed her accordingly,” Ingrid says. “Her dress goes very low, and she looks so funny. It’s little things like that.”

As for the puppet version of Almonte townspeople, some will be dressed in 1940s-style clothes and others will be wearing replicas of their daily garb.

Dressing a puppet can take from 3–4 hours to a couple of days, depending on the complexity of the costume. Ingrid explains that the biggest challenge she faces is finding material because so many fabric stores have closed. And that’s an issue whether she’s designing costumes in Almonte or for Teatro SEA in New York.



Ingrid Hamster Harris (at bottom) in her studio with some of the puppet cast of *It’s a Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life* (try to find the second Ingrid!)

Puppets Up! Artistic Director Noreen Young described her longtime friend as “incredibly quick, efficient, and inventive. As the puppet maker, I’m always very happy to work with her.”

And Ingrid is happy to have the opportunity. “You create something that has to be completely pleasing to the eye of the public,” she explains, “so I create something that has to be a little witty; it has to be funny and in line with what the producers are saying. The costumes have to help make the show, and I want to live up to it. It’s not just making a few costumes and then you’re done. No, not at all. It all becomes a big production in my studio.”

It’s a Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life plays at the Almonte Old Town Hall on Friday, December 15 at 7:30PM, Saturday the 16th at 2:30 and 7:30PM, and Sunday the 17th at 2:30PM. Due to some naughty puppet antics, the show is not recommended for those under 16 years of age.

Tickets are \$25 and are available in person in Almonte at Baker Bob’s, in Carleton Place at The Blossom Shop, and in Pakenham at The Pakenham General Store. They are also available online at <puppetsup.ca>. — Marc D. Allan

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Light Up the Night

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December 2, 2017, 1pm
Pakenham

Parade of Lights

December 3, 2017, 5pm
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www.exploremississippimills.ca



Kintail Country Christmas

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Pakenham Frost Festival

January 2018
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www.exploremississippimills.ca



Mid-Winter Milling

February 24, 2018
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For more information, please contact Tiffany MacLaren at tmaclaren@mississippimills.ca
or visit www.exploremississippimills.ca

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Check out page 28 for great
GIFTS FOR TEENAGERS

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Words From Westport

Enchanting New Looks for Old Materials

Past Time Home Decor owners Deb Boudreau and Sean Matthews are recreating old-fashioned country décor by repurposing, recycling and reusing old barnboard, old discarded windows and doors, beach glass and many other items. Along with fourteen other artisans, they have created a place in Westport where folks can peruse these items of past glory, and purchase them for their own.

by Georgia Ferrell

Now in their second year in Westport, Deb and Sean have created a remarkable artisan workshop and business, to the delight of many locals and visitors. Coming from Cape Breton, Deb creates lively scenes in old window frames that take us to the beach and introduce us to the world of down-east mariners. Sean is an accomplished carpenter with a knack for working with old wood.

Along with other local artisans, they offer wonderful examples of old materials remade into items of lovely home décor. Vintage doors become hall stands for your coats and toques, old windows become works of art to display your favourite photos, ladders turn into shelving for special souvenirs, apple baskets are the new lampshades, old barnboard turns into beautiful frames... I could go on and on!

The idea for this wonderful boutique began with the world of art shows and fairs. A customer posted a photo of a cabinet made from old barnboard and, at Deb's insistence, Sean began working with that material. Their world of frames, hall stands, candle holders and many other items was born.

Looking for a location for their business, they found Westport while working on a home renovation on Devil Lake. Located at 29 Church Street in Westport, Past Time Home Decor awaits you with superb items remade from recycled doors and windows, as well as lovely handcrafted candles, soaps, sweaters, toques, mitts and scarves. And you must come and see the wonderful bears carved from tree trunks with a chain saw!

Together, Deb and Sean have brought delight and smiles to visitors to their store. For more information



Vintage materials get a whole new look at Past Time Home Decor in Westport

you can email them at pasttime613@gmail.com, call 273-3827, or find them on Facebook. Custom orders and commissions are also available.

Upcoming Events

There are also several events taking place at The Cove Inn around the holiday season. For more details about these and other shows, visit coveinn.com:

- **Handmade Hearts Holiday Market** is Thursday, December 7 from 6-9PM, with music by Logan Brown and Taylor Angus (\$15)
- **Christmas Eve Jazz Night** is Saturday, December 23 from 9-11PM, with the Spencer Evans Trio (\$5)
- **New Year's Eve with Turpin's Trail** is Saturday, December 31 from 7PM-1AM, with buffet, bubbly, party favours and live music (\$50)

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Writer Creativity Workshops in Perth

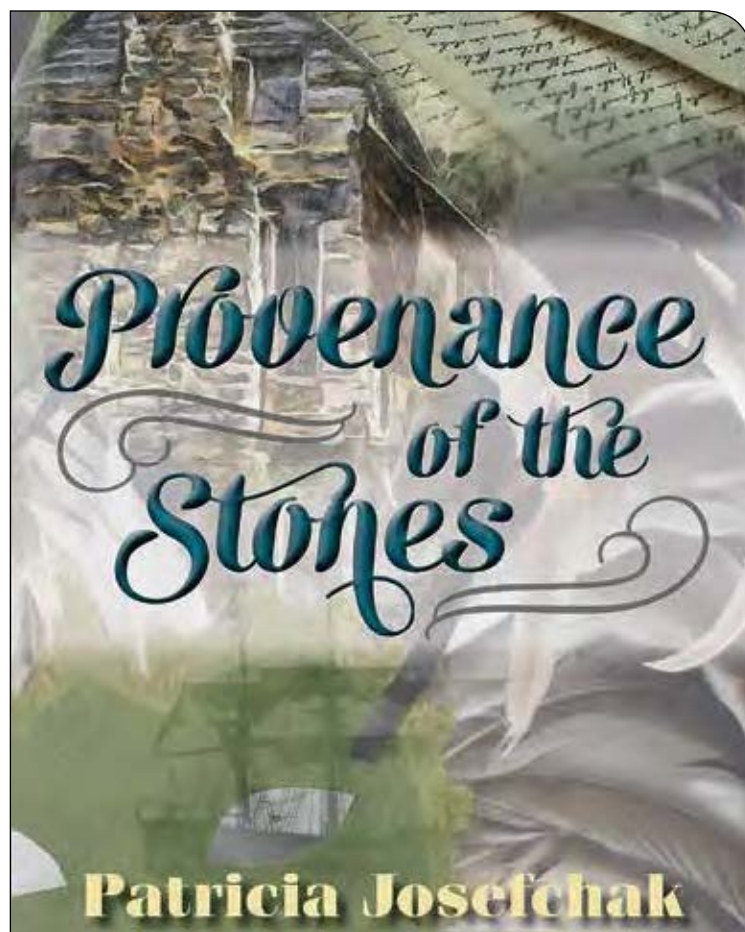
It was last winter that staff at the Perth Union Library met with Patricia Josefchak, a local historic mystery author, to discuss ideas for a writing workshop that they could offer the community. Recently, Patricia conducted a Creative Toolkit Presentation/Workshop for a handful of teens and tweens, hosted by the library. "They love to write and most aspire to be authors... they were truly a pleasure to be with," enthused Josefchak, "and Perth's library is a perfect venue; you're surrounded by creativity and heritage."

"Sometimes there's no lack of love or motivation... sometimes it's getting past the blank page and finding inspiration," Josefchak offered. "I'm not here to teach *how* to write, but rather to share a method I've used all my life to prompt creativity — a tool, if you like, that a writer can add to their creative toolkit." This presentation/workshop offers such a tool, and sharing her experience is important to Josefchak. "It's my motivation for putting the time and effort into developing this workshop. There are two parts: I start with a 45- to 50-minute presentation where I

present the approach and encourage questions and interaction, and then the participants get a chance to try it."

And how did it go? "I was very pleased with the results of my efforts and even happier that the group was eager to try and, I think, maybe even a little surprised that they liked the results of their efforts," she replied. "Some said they would continue to work on the idea they began in the workshop."

Patricia will be running another Creative Toolkit Presentation/Workshop for teens and tweens on Saturday, December 28, and one for adult participants on Saturday, January 13. Each one runs from 12:30–2:30PM and is limited to six participants so that quality time can be spent on discussion, questions and efforts of the workshop. If there is enough interest, she may also facilitate a writers' group at the library in future. There is no charge for the workshops, because Patricia feels that: "it's my way of giving back to my neighbourhood and my community". She and her husband live on Otter Lake and they call the Rideau Lakes home.



Local author Patricia Josefchak will be facilitating Writer Creativity workshops for teens (in December) and adults (in January)

To add to this, Patricia signed and donated her latest book to the Perth Union Library, which was just recently released by Burnstown Publishing House <burnstownpublishing.com>. Entitled *Touchstones, Provenance of the Stones, Book II*, it is the second in the historic Rideau Lakes mystery series set in 1850s Canada. It's available at local booksellers and directly from the publisher.

For more information or to register, please visit contact the library at 267-1224 or <info@perthunionlibrary.ca>.

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Hallmark in Carleton Place
 or **Special Greetings** in Smiths Falls.

Return the gift to the Angel Tree location by **Wednesday December 13th** & volunteers will ensure local Seniors receive their gift in time for Christmas.

You can also give on-line using the **Virtual Angel Tree** at <https://goo.gl/1zhaEg>.

For more information please contact Sarah at North Lanark Community Health Centre 613-259-2182 ext 2435



MMLT's Big Creek Campaign Achieves First Milestone

On Giving Tuesday, the **Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust** launched an ambitious campaign to raise \$48,500 for the acquisition and stewardship of the very special Byrne Big Creek Nature Preserve near McDonalds Corners. Through the generous support of Irene's Pub on Bank Street in Ottawa, the first \$5000 in donations made to the campaign have been matched, doubling their value. According to pub owner Kara-Lee Golota, contributing was an easy decision. "We believe in the goals of the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust to preserve wild lands for future generations. This is important for all of us who live in the Ottawa region."

With the Big Creek Campaign having achieved its first milestone of \$10,000 en route to its \$48,500 goal, new donors have stepped forward wishing to support the Campaign by offering to match further contributions during December.

This ecologically significant property was bequeathed to the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust by Joel Byrne, who was a strong supporter of the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists, the Macnamara Field Naturalists' Club and the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust. In this act of giving, Joel fulfilled his dream of protecting forever this special place that he knew would continue to touch the deepest needs of future generations.

The Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust has been securing and stewarding wild areas in the



The owners of Irene's Pub on Bank Street in the Glebe, Alex and Kara-Lee Golota, are seen here with Bethany Armstrong of the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust. "Irene's Pub is proud to be a supporter of the Big Creek Campaign," the Golotas said. "It was an easy decision."

Mississippi and Lower Madawaska watersheds since 2004. More information about the Land Trust and its Big Creek Campaign can be found online at <mmlt.ca>.

Provenance of the Stones & Touchstones

by Patricia Josefchak, Rideau Lakes Historic Mystery Author.



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Check out page 33 for great gifts for LONG DISTANCE FRIENDS



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- Blue Q messenger bag made from used grain sacks, The Green Counter.....\$30
- Non-detergent laundry ball, Booo Clothing.....\$49.99

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Smiths Falls is Set for the Season!

Heritage House Museum Events

With Christmas right around the corner, the Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum is excited to host its annual **Victorian Christmas Tea Party** on Sunday, December 3 from 1–3PM. Share in the sights, sounds and flavours of an 1860s Christmas. Gather around a traditionally decorated tree in the parlour and enjoy a cup of tea or hot apple cider with a homemade seasonal treat, made specially by the Museum's elves. Enjoy the talented sounds of the Giocosio string quartet and local carollers as they entertain guests with seasonal favourites.

Guests who are looking for a little more history on Christmas traditions are welcome to wander through the period rooms of the house with a tour guide at 1PM and 2PM, discovering the origins of holiday rituals from the first Christmas cards and holiday music to decorations and food. For younger visitors there are a variety of crafts, games and activities throughout the afternoon. Come visit the craft corner or search the Museum to help Santa find his elves! Faces young and old will

surely brighten up as Santa Claus makes a special appearance, before he returns to the North Pole to pack his sleigh for Christmas Eve. Don't forget to ask Santa for a photograph by the old fireplace in the parlour.

During their visit, guests will also experience the original artwork that is on display as part of the 36th annual **Art Show and Sale**, which runs until December 20. Several of the local exhibiting artists will be on hand to discuss their pieces. Many works on display are for sale and would make excellent holiday gifts for family and friends.

Last but not least, the Museum **gift shop** will offer holiday sales, samples, and draws. Pick up that perfect artisan craft, ornament, jewellery or local history book. Admission is by donation and everyone is welcome!

The Heritage House Museum will be fully decorated for the season from December 1 to the 20th, and is open Thursdays from 12–8PM, Fridays and Saturdays from 10AM to 5PM, and Sundays from 12–4PM at 11 Old Sly's Road in Smiths Falls. For more information on the museum or to book your holiday tour, please call 283–6311 or email <heritagehouse@smithsfalls.ca>.

Canada 150 Year-End Jamboree

To cap off a spectacular sesquicentennial year, the Town of Smiths Falls is presenting a Canada 150 Year-End Jamboree on December 29, from 5PM to 12AM. This final event of the On the Roll Live Music Series, part of the Canada 150 Community Celebrations, will take place at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95 (located at 7 Main St East

in Smiths Falls). It will include live music by performers from Smiths Falls and the region, food by Café Whim and the Legion Auxiliary, an Open Mic segment, and the presentation of photos and images from the entire year of 150 celebrations in the area.

Local performers are invited to sign up for the Open Mic, which will run from 5–7PM and feature food by Café Whim. Come and share your talents with your community! Contact Ingrid Bron at <ibron@smithsfalls.ca>.

Feature performers will then take the stage from 7–11PM. You'll hear Juno award winner Jenny Whiteley, with her partner (in music and life!) Joey Wright. Music critics have compared Jenny Whiteley's striking vocals and songwriting to Emmy Lou Harris and Lucinda Williams, raving that she "swings effortlessly from black-hearted back-porch Americana to Laurel Canyon country" (*No Depression*). In addition to her two Juno wins, she has been nominated four times as a solo artist as well as with The Junior Jug Band and Heartbreak Hill. Joey Wright has recorded with Sarah Harmer, John Southworth, Amy Millan, Doug Paisley, Jenny Whiteley, Jill and Matt Barber, Ron Hynes, Oh Suzanna and The Banjo Special, to name a few. His latest CD, *Country, Music*, is "a musical meeting of the minds of some of folk and pop's most respected musicians".

Jenny and Joey will be accompanied by Chris Brown on keyboards, Mike Eckert on



Photo by Ali Eisner

Jenny Whiteley (above) and Joey Wright headline at the Canada 150 Year-End Jamboree in Smiths Falls on December 29

pedal steel, Julian Brown on bass, and Dean Stone on drums. Other special musical guests at the event include Ali McCormick, Amanda Jordan, Tom Watson, Andy Mason and Freddy Dixon.

To round out the evening, the Royal Canadian Legion Women's Auxiliary will provide food from 10PM to 12AM. If you have photos you would like to share from Canada 150 events you attended in and around Smiths Falls this summer, please send them to Ingrid Bron, Coordinator of Economic Development and Tourism, at <ibron@smithsfalls.ca> so that they can be included in the show!

Amazingly, tickets for this incredible evening of entertainment are only \$20 from Eventbrite (search for Canada 150 Year-End Jamboree). For more information, visit <smithsfalls.ca> or <facebook.com/Canada150SmithsFalls>.



Don't miss the annual Art Show & Sale at the Heritage House Museum!

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Mental Wellness Room at Textile Museum

The Mississippi Valley Textile Museum strives to be an inclusive, welcoming space in the community, and is very proud to host Lanark County's second Mental Wellness Room, which opened on Tuesday, November 14. The first Mental Wellness Room was started in Carleton Place at the Carambeck Community Centre.

The Room is intended to be a friendly, supportive space, where people living with mental illness can socialize, relax, or chat with others who are in similar circumstances. People are encouraged to stop by, watch a movie, play a board game, and share victories or frustrations from their week. "I love the company and sharing stories of similar issues," explains one participant.

The Room is designed to be a safe space in the community, and in order for it to remain that way and to achieve its goal of helping those with mental health issues to connect with others, everyone who visits the Room is asked to use the utmost discretion in revealing personal information they hear during their visit.

The organizers could certainly benefit from outside contributions to help cover costs for this labour of love.

You are welcome to drop by on Tuesdays to join the conversation in the Mental Wellness Room.

Hours are from 11AM to 4PM at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, located at 3 Rosamond Street East in Almonte. For more information please contact David at <ddrolling696@gmail.com>.



The Mental Wellness Room at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum will be open on Tuesdays from 11AM to 4PM

Gifts for Husbands

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- Maple BBQ sauce, Fulton's Pancake House.....\$10
- Brome Squirrel Buster Plus bird feeder, Gilligallou Bird Inc.....\$122
- Gift certificate for a food tour of Almonte, The Good Food Tour.....\$65
- Sterling silver maple leaf lapel pin w/ ruby in 18k yellow gold, Kehla Design...\$375
- Bamboo socks & underwear, Booo Clothing.....\$8.99-29.99
- 45-min therapeutic massage, Kim Narraway, RMT.....\$75
- Lanark Sheepskin slippers, in sizes up to 14, Riverguild Fine Crafts.....\$88
- Works by regional and Canadian artists, Sivarulrasa Gallery.....various
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Local Men's Shed Partners with CWF

This past summer the Hackberry Men's Shed of Carleton Place learned of the Canadian Wildlife Federation's need for people to help build bat houses. Having just completed a tool shed for the CP Community Gardens, the Men's Shed was open to new challenges and considered building ten such houses for the CWF.

A few days after meeting with the program's director and agreeing to this, the Men's Shed received a note saying: "we have a bat emergency, we will need more houses." It seems CWF was now looking for some group to complete the entire order, so their program could stay on schedule.

To construct fifty bat houses in a month and a half seemed like a tall order for a group of fifteen men, a number of whom had prior commitments. But if you don't try, you'll never know if you can do these things. So we completed the first twelve, for which we had already obtained supplies, and three weeks later CWF took delivery of them.

Then it was back to the supply store to get on with the next 38. Originally we had hoped to complete the full order by mid-October, but bottlenecks in the production process slowed down the project. We then targeted the end of October to complete the deal, so that CWF could install the bat houses before snow flies to have them ready for the bats next spring.

Why the need for bat houses, and particularly this style, which is a nursery bat house? Because bats along the east coast of North America, especially the little brown bat, are

on the verge of extinction due to white nose syndrome, a fungal disease that has wiped out some 5 to 6 million bats in the last ten years.

So who cares if a few bats go missing? They're not very popular at the best of times! Well — with fewer bats there are more bugs and mosquitoes around. And more mosquitoes means more things like West Nile Virus (a cost to the health care system), and more bugs to infect crops which then need more spraying which in turn boosts the cost of food. But bats consume their own weight in these insects every night! So they are our natural partners in balancing the ecosystem.

When white nose syndrome first appeared in North America, seemingly having arrived from Europe, local bats had no immunity to the disease and it spread rapidly and fatally. But in Europe, where the disease has been known for some time, bats have developed an immunity to the disease. So it is hoped that by helping nurture the reproduction of the species, in time our North American bats will develop a similar tolerance to the disease. Anyone want to help with this effort at natural conservation? Check out the CWF website <cwf-fcf.org> and offer to be a bat hero by having one of these houses erected at your place.

Hackberry Men's Shed

Hackberry Men's Shed started in 2015 and is a member of the Canadian Men's Sheds Association. Their purpose is to overcome isolation, loneliness and depression among



Pictured above (l-to-r) are Hackberry Men's Shed members Tim Pullen, Ray Kamm, Al Brown and John Peters, and (in the blue shirt) Mike Anissimoff of the Canadian Wildlife Federation

men, especially after retirement or in time of life crisis; to preserve and share life skills and knowledge; and to be a benefit to the community. They meet alternate Monday nights at 7PM, and between those meetings they gather on alternate Tuesdays for breakfast at 7:30AM at the Gourmet Restaurant on Highway 7 in Carleton Place to


enjoy food and fellowship and swap stories. They also gather at mutually agreeable times to work on community projects such as the bat houses. For more information, visit <menssheds.ca>, look for the "Lanark Men's Shed" page on Facebook, or email <hackberrycp@gmail.com>. — John Peters

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From Handel to the Beach Boys

The Goulbourn Male Chorus is gearing up for Christmas with sing-outs at local seniors' homes leading up to their annual Christmas Concert scheduled for Saturday, December 9 at 7PM at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Kanata. Under new musical director Scott Auchinleck, who is well known in the region as music director for a number of choral groups, this year's concert promises an entertaining evening as indicated by the concert's intriguing title: "From Handel to the Beach Boys". The program chosen by Scott, which includes classical Christmas numbers, popular Christmas songs, solos, duets and sing-alongs, has been selected to represent the wide range of talent in the chorus.



The Goulbourn Male Chorus will present their Christmas concert on December 9

Prior to the concert, the GMC will be singing out at Stittsville Villa and Bridlewood Trails. After the concert, the Chorus will be performing at the Perley and Rideau Veterans' Health Centre.

Tickets for the Christmas Concert are \$15 each and are available from chorus members, Brown's Independent Grocer in Stittsville, Gaia Java Stittsville, and Kanata Cleaners, as well as online at <goulbournmalechorus.com>.

Gifts for Funky People




Hand-cut 1850s Upper Canada penny puzzle, Alliance Coin.....\$30
 Yo Sox, cool designs, The Book Nook.....\$10.95
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 Stylish hats, headbands & gloves by Leopards & Roses, Mill Street Fashions...\$30 & up
 Banjo lessons (4-pack), Mississippi Mills Musicworks.....\$100
 Nepali yak wool shawls & blankets, That's The Spirit.....\$26-49

Gifts for Teenagers

B'Livinn nail polish (pick your colour & your box), Cashmere & Rose...\$14.95-39.95
 Baseball t-shirts with the Almonte falls, Equator Coffee Roasters.....\$30
 Canadian Bath Bomb Co. bath bombs, Foodsmiths.....\$4.99
 Blue Q messenger bag made from used grain sacks, The Green Counter.....\$30
 Thrum mittens by "Game of Thrums", The Grotto.....\$85
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Cultural Appropriation or Homage?

One of the hot topics that has been brought to the forefront in 2017 is the idea of cultural appropriation. This definition, taken from the Cambridge English Dictionary, sums it up pretty well: "Cultural appropriation is the act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing that you understand or respect this culture."

by Tony Stuart

Most of us have seen examples of what we now consider inappropriate cultural appropriation, including the wearing of ceremonial headdresses by non-Indigenous people, or fashion shows that borrow liberally from the styles of dress of various countries in the African continent.

Lately I've been thinking about the idea of cultural appropriation from a musical perspective. As musicians, we borrow elements of different cultures all the time, and I'd like to think that we understand and pay homage to these various cultures. It's just something that musicians do... we hear music that attracts us, and we learn it, and incorporate into our repertoire. I'll provide you with a few examples that come to mind from my own experience.

I play in a jazz duo called The Somerset Combo with local guitarist Ric Denis. A great deal of the music that we play was written by African American composers as part of what we now call "The Great American Songbook", which I discussed in last month's column. Ric and I are a couple of white musicians, but we have studied this music extensively, listened to many recordings, and play these tunes with the utmost respect for what these composers have crafted. In this case, we are paying homage to the likes of Miles Davis, Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, and others, despite coming from very different backgrounds.

A few years back, I performed a piece of Klezmer music in a recital. Klezmer is a music that comes from the Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe. As a clarinetist, I have always been drawn to Klezmer because the clarinet players are just so fantastic, and I have always wanted to learn about that style of playing. In preparing for that performance, I listened to a variety of recordings, and got advice from a Jewish musician who was much more familiar with the style than I was. The performance was very well received, and I'd like to think that I was paying homage to a style of music that I greatly admire.

Cultural appropriation in music circles is everywhere, but not necessarily in a bad way. As we enter the Christmas/holiday season, we see examples of songs and carols that have come from many different cultures. Is singing *O Christmas Tree* cultural appropriation because it was originally a German folk tune? I'd like to think that it isn't. We have examples of Christmas music from all over the world that people of all cultures enjoy singing and performing. For that matter, there are many agnostics and atheists who still enjoy listening to and performing Christmas music, despite not believing in the religious stories that surround this season.

I'd like to think that this musical blending of cultures is a good thing, as long as we respect where the music came from, and recognize its significance for the culture that originally created it. One of the strengths of Canadian society is that we celebrate and encourage diversity, and as a musician, it is always a rewarding experience to learn something new from another cultural tradition. I hope that we can continue on this path as a society.

— *Tony Stuart is the Music Director at Notre Dame Catholic High School in Carleton Place, and a freelance professional musician.*



Primary Care for Seniors

The Primary Care Outreach to Seniors program at the North Lanark Community Health Centre recently celebrated three years of serving the community. The celebration featured a performance by the Men of the Clyde choir and the opportunity to browse display tables with information about local community services.

The Primary Care Outreach to Seniors program is a free program aiming to help seniors maintain their health and independence. A Registered Nurse and a Community Health Worker visit seniors age 65+ living at home, linking them to care and resources. The program serves seniors who live north of Highway 7 in Lanark Highlands, Mississippi Mills and Carleton Place. Referrals to the PCO program are accepted from anyone. For more information, please contact Meredith or Sarah at 259-2182.

December Pub Listings

- The Cove** (Westport, 273-3636): Wed Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, 6:30-9:30PM
 Dec 1 John Wilberforce, 6-9PM
 Dec 2 Bob Robertson Trio feat. Kevin Head, 6-9PM
 Dec 7 Handmade Hearts Holiday Market (Logan Brown & Taylor Angus, local vendors), 6-9PM, \$15
 Dec 8 Shawn McCullough & Wade Foster, 7-10PM, buffet+show \$35
 Dec 9 Healy & Orr Rock 'n Roll Xmas, 7-11PM, buffet+show \$40
 Dec 15 Xmas Classic Rock w/Tony Silvestri Band, 7-11PM, buffet+show \$50
 Dec 16 A Jeff Callery Christmas, 7-10PM, buffet+show \$35
 Dec 22 Henry Norwood & Wade Foster, 7-10PM, \$5
 Dec 23 Jazz Night w/Spencer Evans Trio, 9-11PM, \$5
 Dec 29 Head over Heels, 6-9PM
 Dec 30 Logan Brown & Taylor Angus, 6-9PM
 Dec 31 Turpin's Trail NYE, 7PM-1 am, \$50
- Valley Food and Drink Co.** (Calabogie, 752-2676x311): 8PM, Thurs Karaoke
 Dec 9 Sam Steel & the Mass of Humanity
 Dec 16 Simon Clarke
- Chesswood** (CP, 492-4377):
 Dec 1, 15 The Somerset Combo, 7-10PM
- The Swan at Carp** (Carp, 839-7926):
 Dec 1, 15 Steve Barrette Trio, jazz, 7-10PM
- The Royal Oak** (Kanata, 591-3895): jazz on Sun, 2-5PM
 Dec 3, 17 APEX Jazz Band
 Dec 10 Magnolia Rhythm Kings
- Naismith Pub** (Almonte, 256-6336):
 Wed Open Celtic Jam, 7:30-10PM
- Carp Masonic Lodge:** Mon Carp Celtic Jam, 7-9PM (except Dec. 25)
- Ashton Pub** (Ashton, 257-4423): Sun Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, 2-5PM
- Golden Arrow Pub** (Perth, 267-4500):
 9PM Wed Karaoke
 Dec 1, 22 Shawn McCullough
 Dec 2 Comedy Night
 Dec 8 Simone Beach
 Dec 15 Taylor Angus
 Dec 16, 29 Brea Lawrenson
 Dec 23 Poetic Justice Band
 Dec 26 Matt Dickson
 Dec 30 Ted Lalonde
 Dec 31 NYE w/Jimmy Tri-Tone Band
- Slackoni's** (Perth, 326-0380):
 Dec 21 Jazz Night w/Peter Brown Trio, 6-9PM
- Bridges Bar and Grill** (Pakenham, 624-5939): Sat Karaoke 8PM
 Dec 9 Blues Series, 6-10PM
 O'Reilly's Ale House (Perth, 267-7994):
 Tues Brock Zeman & Blair Hogan 8:30PM;
 Wed Open Jam w/Dave Balfour 8PM
 Dec 1, 23 Jimmy Tri-Tone Band, 8:45PM
 Dec 8 Tom Watson, 8:30PM
 Dec 9 Nolan Hubbard, 8:45PM
 Dec 15 Stephen Fisher, 8:30PM
 Dec 16 Ramblin' Valley Trio, 8:45PM
 Dec 22 The Godfreys, 8:45PM
 Dec 29 River City Junction, 9PM
- Alice's Village Café** (Carp, 470-2233):
 Open Mic Thurs, 7-10PM
- The Waterfront Gastropub** (CP, 257-5755): Sun Blues w/ Redneck Limousine 3-6PM
 Dec 1 Mississippi Blues Society Jam, 8:30PM
- The 2 Grands** (Arnprior, 558-5050):
 Fri/Sat Dueling Pianos, 7PM - 1AM
- Neat Coffee Shop** (Burnstown, 433-9960): 8PM
 Dec 2 Johnson Crook, \$15
 Dec 9 Ray Montford, \$27.50
 Dec 15 John D Huston - A Christmas Carol, \$15
 Dec 16 Pindles, \$15

Gifts for Music Lovers

- Vinyl records and CDs (classic rock, pop, blues, jazz)**, Almonte Antiques\$2 & up
Heavy metal or steel guitars by Jack Stekelenburg, Bittersweet.....\$700-\$1900
Series pass to the 2018 season (4 concerts), Folkus Concert Series\$90
Gord Downie's "Introduce Yerself", Mill Street Books\$18.99
Canadian-made Godin Art & Lutherie guitars, Miss Mills Musicworks..... \$399 & up

Gifts for Kids

- Ravensburger puzzles**, The Book Nook..... \$10 & up
Authentic Mennonite toboggans & sleighs, Cedar Hill X-mas Tree Farm.....\$85 & up
Hydraulic robot arm, L.G. Lee & Sons.....\$69.50
Ukulele lessons (4-pack), Mississippi Mills Musicworks.....\$100
Family Pastimes co-operative games, Riverguild Fine Crafts.....\$15-30

Gifts for Over \$100

- Cashmere robe from Lemon**, Cashmere & Rose.....\$209.95
Gift certificate for an intro to glass fusing course, Current Works of Glass.....\$160
Paintings and prints by Jennifer Noxon, General Fine Craft.....\$200-350
Fashion-forward tunic tops by Kollontai, Mill Street Fashions.....\$200
Naturopathic consult or food sensitivity testing gift cert, Whole Medicine.....\$165

Claiming Column

Auditions: *Guys & Dolls*, CP, Jan 6
 Almonte Fair Board Winter Dance, Jan 13
 Jack de Keyzer Band, Westport, Jan 19-20
 Pakenham Frost Festival, Jan 20-21, 27-28
 Celfest FUNspiel, Almonte, Jan 20
 Almonte in Concert, Jan 21
 PDCF Casino Night, Perth, Jan 26
 Robbie Burns Scottish Tea, Almonte, Jan 28
 Amanda Rheume, Almonte, Jan 27
 On a First Name Basis, Perth, Feb 1-11
 Harpdog Brown, Westport, Feb 16
 Panto can be Murder, Perth, Feb 16-24
 Almonte in Concert, Feb 18
 The Little Mermaid, Jr., CP, Feb 23-Mar 4
 Rumours, Smiths Falls, Feb 23-Mar 4
 Heritage Dinner, Almonte, Feb 23
 Folkus: Sussex, Almonte, Feb 24
 Mid-Winter Milling, Almonte, Feb 24
 Almonte in Concert, Mar 17
 Sean Pinchin Band, Westport, Mar 16
 St. Patty's Dance, Pakenham, Mar 17
 Soup for Thought, Almonte, Mar 23
 Folkus: Big Little Lions, Almonte, Mar 24

Festivals

Festival of Lights, Dec 1, 6PM. Bonfire, fireworks, food. Crystal Palace, Perth
Light Up The Night, Dec 1, 7PM. Xmas concert w/Wayne Rostad, Santa, fireworks. Mill St., Almonte. 256-1077. Free
Santa Claus Parade, Dec 2, 1PM. Pakenham. 256-1077, exploremississippimills.ca
Santa Claus Parade, Dec 2, 5-7PM. Downtown Perth.
Almonte Night Parade, Dec 3, 5PM. Downtown Almonte, 256-1077
Kintail Country Christmas, Dec 9, 11AM-3PM. Crafts, kids' gift shop, rides, Santa. Mill of Kintail, Almonte. mvc.on.ca. \$10 per vehicle
Santa Claus Parade, Dec 9, 1PM. Lanark. 256-7881, bob@mingie.com
New Year's Eve Family Fireworks, Dec 30, 4-7:30PM. Skate, sleigh rides, bonfire. Fireworks 6PM. Beckwith Park

Literature

Reading: Wendy McIntyre, Dec 14, 7PM. CP author, *Hunting Piero*. CP Library

Local Food

Carp Farmers' Christmas Market, Dec 1 (3-8PM), Dec 2 (8AM-2PM). Carp Fairgrounds. 786-1010, carpfarmersmarket.ca
Almonte Farmers' Xmas Market, Dec 9, 9AM-3PM. Almonte Com Centre. See FB

Visual Arts

WCAS's \$100 & Under Sale, Dec 1 (2-8PM), 2 (8AM-4PM), 3 (12-4PM). St. Paul's Church, Carp. westcarletonartsociety.ca
Nick of Time Artisan Show, Dec 2, 10AM-3PM. McMartin House, Perth
Open Studio-Living Stones, Dec 2-3, 10AM-5PM. John Schweighardt Studio, Lanark. livingstonessculptures.ca
3rd Anniversary Party, Dec 2, 3-6PM. Sivarulrasa Gallery, Almonte. sivarulrasa.com
Xmas on the Clyde, Dec 2, 10AM-3PM. 2144 Pine Grove Rd., Lanark. 267-6670
Biggest Little Xmas Market, Dec 3, 10AM-4PM. Middleville Com Centre. Free
Vernissage: Richard James Hutton, Dec 14, 7-9PM. Fairview Manor, Almonte

WHAT'S ON IN

Monday **Tuesday** **Wednesday** **Thursday**

Diefenbunker presents CANEX 1977 canteen
 Fairview Manor Lobby presents "Doors" by Off the Wall Artists [to Dec 12] & Richard James Hutton's "Northern Reflections" paintings [from Dec 12]
 General Fine Craft, Art & Design features *Play of Light*, Jay Li's oil paintings <generalfinecraft.com>
 Heritage House Museum presents their 36th annual Art Show & Sale <smithsfalls.ca/heritagehouse> [to Dec 20]
 Mississippi Valley Textile Museum presents Noelle Hamlyn's machinery in salt, Jenny McMaster's fibre maps [to Dec 16] <mvmtm.ca>
 Sivarulrasa Studio & Gallery presents their 3rd Anniversary Show <sivarulrasa.com>
 The **Mississippi Mills Chambers Gallery** presents fibre artists Soul Play
 The **Almonte Library Corridor Gallery** presents Linda & Sam Hamilton's paper flowers, ink & prints

<p> Bridge Club, Amprior Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge Good Grief Walking Group, Almonte Bridge Club, Smiths Falls </p>	<p> Brock Zeman & Blair Hogan, O'Reilly's Pub Elf - The Musical, Perth Green Drinks, Perth Hackberry Men's Shed, CP Bridge Club, Smiths Falls Town Singers Xmas Concert, Carleton Place </p>	<p> Acoustic Stage, O'Reilly's Pub Bridge Club, Almonte CP Hort: Potluck, Carleton Place Grand Opening of Musicworks, Almonte Karaoke, Golden Arrow Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove Social Conversation Circle, CP Xmas Open House w/Joshua Hyslop, Almonte </p>	<p> Bridge Club, Amprior Cinderella, Perth Festival of Trees, Sharbot Lake Karaoke, Valley Food & Drink Co. Logan Brown & Taylor Angus, The Cove MMPL Travelogue: Eclipse & U.S., Almonte Open Mic, Alice's Village Cafe </p>
<p> Carol Sing, Lanark Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge Good Grief Walking Group, Almonte Hackberry Men's Shed, Carleton Place Parkinson's Support Group, Perth Bridge Club, Smiths Falls Bridge Club, Amprior </p>	<p> Brock Zeman & Blair Hogan, O'Reilly's Pub Christmas Crafternoon Drop-In, Carleton Place Bridge Club, Smiths Falls W. Carleton Garden: Potluck, Carp Women's Business Group Lunch, CP </p>	<p> Acoustic Stage w/Dave Balfour, O'Reilly's Pub Bridge Club, Almonte Film: The Polar Express, Almonte Friends Forever Club Potluck, Bolingbroke Karaoke, Golden Arrow Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove </p>	<p> Carols for Christmas, Pakenham Karaoke, Valley Food & Drink Co. NFB screening, Carleton Place Open Mic, Alice's Village Cafe Bridge Club, Amprior Aladdin, Smiths Falls Reading: Wendy McIntyre, CP Toastmasters, CP Vernissage: Richard James Hutton, Almonte Xmas Luncheon, Amprior </p>
<p> Auditions: Panto can be Murder, Perth Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge Craft Club, Carleton Place Good Grief Walking Group, Almonte Bridge Club, Smiths Falls Bridge Club, Amprior </p>	<p> Brock Zeman & Blair Hogan, O'Reilly's Pub Gerry Mitchell Xmas Concert, Perth Hackberry Men's Shed, CP Perth Citizens' Band Xmas Concert, Perth Bridge Club, Smiths Falls </p>	<p> Acoustic Stage w/Dave Balfour, O'Reilly's Pub Bridge Club, Almonte Karaoke, Golden Arrow Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove Social Conversation Circle, CP </p>	<p> Bridge Club, Amprior Jazz Night w/Peter Brown Trio, Slackoni's Karaoke, Valley Food & Drink Co. Meditation Club, Carleton Place Open Mic, Alice's Village Cafe </p>
<p> Perth Community Xmas Day Dinner, Perth </p>	<p> Christmas Bird Count, Pakenham-Amprior Matt Dickson, Golden Arrow Bridge Club, Smiths Falls </p>	<p> Acoustic Stage w/Dave Balfour, O'Reilly's Pub Bridge Club, Almonte Christmas Bird Count, Carleton Place Classic Holiday Movie, Perth Karaoke, Golden Arrow Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove </p>	<p> Classic Holiday Movie, Perth Free Holiday Skate, Beckwith Karaoke, Valley Food & Drink Co. Open Mic, Alice's Village Cafe Writing Presentation/Workshop, Perth Bridge Club, Amprior </p>

Theatre

A Christmas Story, Dec 1, 8:30PM Dec 2-3, 9-10:20PM. Studio Theatre, Perth. studiotheatreperth.com. \$24, \$10 students
Cinderella, Dec 1, 7, 8 at 7:30PM and Dec 2, 3, 9, 10 at 2PM. BarnDoor Prod'ns. Full Circle Theatre, Perth. 267-1884. \$22; \$10 students
Aladdin, Dec 8, 14-15 at 7:30PM; Dec 9-10, 16-17 at 2PM. Family fun. Station Theatre, SF. 283-0300. \$20/\$10
The Polar Express, Dec 13, 1:30PM. Almonte Library, 256-1037. Free
NFB screening, Dec 14, 7PM. Drop-in. CP Library, 257-2702. Free
LIPS 'No Rules' Slam/Open Mic, Dec 15, 7-9PM. Coutts Coffee, Perth. \$5
It's A Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life, Dec 15-16 7:30PM, Dec 16-17 2:30PM. puppetsup.ca. Almonte Old Town Hall. Tix: Baker Bob's, Blossom Shop. \$25

Auditions: Panto can be Murder, Dec 18, 7PM. 5 women, 8 men. Full Circle Theatre, Perth. 267-1884, barndoorproductions.ca
Classic Holiday Movies, Dec 23, 27-20, Jan 2-7. A different classic holiday movie every day! Perth Library
Lanark Laughs, Dec 29, 8:30-10PM. Stand-up comedy. Waterfront Gastropub, CP
Rag Bag Cabaret, Dec 30, 6:30PM cocktails, 8PM show. Tix: Mill St. Books, eventbrite.ca. Almonte Old Town Hall, \$25/30

Youth

Elf - The Musical, Dec 5, 7:30PM. Code's Mill, Perth. musictheatre.ca. \$12
Christmas Crafternoon, Dec 12, 1:30-3:30PM. Ages 3+. CP Library, 257-2702
Kids' Holiday Party, Dec 16, 12:30-2PM. Lanark Library, 259-3068, lanarklibrary.ca
Pancake Breakfast w/Santa, Dec 16, 8:30AM-11AM. Centennial Hall, Franktown

Gerry Mitchell Xmas Concert, Dec 19, 10:30AM. Sing along! Perth Library. 267-1224
Splash'N Boots: Jingle Boots, Dec 23, 11AM & 2PM. Food bank don. Studio Theatre, Perth. ticketsplease.ca. \$23.50
Writing Workshop, Dec 28, 12:30-2:30PM. Patricia Josefchak. Creative Toolkit for teens/tweens. Perth Library, 267-1224

Music

Ennis Sisters Christmas Show, Dec 1, 7:30PM. PDCI, Perth. 485-6434, \$31.25
W. Ottawa Ladies Chorus, Dec 1 7PM, Dec 2 2PM. \$20 online, Gaia Java. St. Paul's, Kanata. westottawaladieschorus.ca
AiC: Classical Christmas Concert, Dec 2, 7:30PM. Tix: almonteinconcert.com, Mill St. Bks. Almonte Old Town Hall
Advent Procession with Carols, Dec 3, 4PM. VV/Tay River Brass Quartet. St. James' Church, Perth. 267-1163

Irish Mythen, Dec 3, 7PM. Perth Restaurant, Perth. 267-7902. \$20
Town Singers Xmas Concert, Dec 3 2PM, Dec 5 7PM. \$12: Bonanza Kids (CP), Mill St Books (Alm). All Nations Church, CP. cptownsingerson.com
Grand Opening of Musicworks, Dec 6, 6-8PM. New owners, specials. 453 Ottawa St., Almonte. mmmusicworks.com
Music to Dine By, Dec 8, 5:30-8PM. Julie Kevan & Peter Brown. Maximilian's Restaurant, 99 Gore St. E., Perth
Goulbourn Male Chorus Xmas Concert, Dec 9, 7PM. Trinity Presbyterian, Carp. goulbournmalechorus.com. \$15
Men & Women of the Tay Concert, Dec 10, 2PM. St. John the Baptist Church, Perth. musicofthetay.org. Free will offering
Sing-in the Season, Dec 10, 2PM. CP Community Band. Zion-Memorial Church, CP. 298-3953. Foodbank donation

DECEMBER 2017

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Festival of Lights, Perth Anne of Green Gables, CP Carp Farmers' Christmas Market, Carp Ennis Sisters Christmas Show, Perth Kate Weekes, Kemptville Light Up The Night, Almonte A Christmas Story, Perth Jimmy Tri-Tone Band, O'Reilly's Pub John Wilberforce, The Cove Shawn McCullough, Golden Arrow Somerset Combo, Chesswood WCAS's Xmas \$100 & Under Sale, Carp West Ottawa Ladies Chorus, Kanata 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Côig, Seeley's Bay Cinderella, Perth North Pole Express, SF Christmas Concert, Almonte Dinner/Dance, SF Christmas House Tours, Carleton Place & Perth Anne of Green Gables The Musical, CP Carp Farmers' Christmas Market, Carp Gifts of Light Gift & Bake Sale, Amprior Mill Workers' Memories, Almonte Nick of Time Artisan Show, Perth Open Studio -Living Stones, Lanark Santa Claus Parade, Pakenham, Perth Vernissage/3rd Anniversary Party, Almonte WCAS's Xmas \$100 & Under Sale, Carp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anne of Green Gables, CP A Christmas Story, Perth Santa Parade, Almonte Biggest Little Xmas Market, Lanark Heritage Perth Christmas House Tour, Perth Lanark County Memorial Service, CP Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Advent Procession with Carols, Perth Open Studio -Living Stones, Lanark Town Singers Xmas Concert, CP Victorian Family Christmas Party, Smiths Falls WCAS's Xmas \$100 & Under Sale, Carp Xmas in CP House Tour, Carleton Place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Christmas Story, Perth Cinderella, Perth Festival of Trees, Sharbot Lake Music to Dine By, Perth Aladdin, Smiths Falls Shawn McCullough & Wade Foster, The Cove Simone Beach, Golden Arrow Tom Watson, O'Reilly's Pub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas Craft Sale, Lanark Healy & Orr, The Cove Cinderella, Perth A Christmas Story, Perth Almonte Farmers' Xmas Market, Almonte Festival of Trees, Sharbot Lake Goulbourn Male Chorus Xmas Concert, Carp Jingle Mingle, Bolingbroke Karaoke, Bridges Bar & Grill Kintail Country Christmas, Almonte Lanark Co. Genealogical Meeting, CP Nolan Hubbard, O'Reilly's Pub Sam Steel & Mass of Humanity, Valley Food & Drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Christmas Story, Perth Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Cinderella, Perth Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak Men & Women of the Tay Concert, Perth Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Outdoor Lessons & Carols, Franktown Aladdin, Smiths Falls Sing-in the Season, Carleton Place Valley Voices Xmas Concert, Almonte
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's A Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life, Almonte John D Huston - A Christmas Carol, Neat LIPS 'No Rules' Slam/Open Mic, Perth Ottawa Choral Society Xmas Concert, Ottawa Aladdin, Smiths Falls Scott Woods Old Time Xmas, Carleton Place Scottish Country Dancing, Perth Stephen Fisher, O'Reilly's Pub Steve Barrette Trio, The Swan at Carp Taylor Angus, Golden Arrow The Somerset Combo, Chesswood Tony Silvestri Band, The Cove Bridge Club, Amprior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Jeff Callery Xmas, The Cove Brea Lawrenson, Golden Arrow Christmas Bird Count, Rideau Ferry Customer Appreciation Party, Almonte It's A Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life, Almonte Karaoke, Bridges Bar & Grill Kids' Holiday Party, Lanark Pancake Breakfast w/Santa, Franktown Aladdin, Smiths Falls Pindles, Neat Coffee Shop Ramblin' Valley Trio, O'Reilly's Pub Simon Clarke, Valley Food & Drink Co. Xmas Open House, Carleton Place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APEX Jazz Band, The Royal Oak Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Dickens' Dinner, Amprior It's A Wonderful Mississippi Mills Life, Almonte Olde Time Christmas Caroling, Prospect Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Aladdin, Smiths Falls Service of Nine Lessons and Carols, Perth Skate with Santa, Beckwith Trad Song Pub Session, Almonte
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Xmas Celebration in Story & Song, Pakenham Bridge Club, Amprior Cadence, Smiths Falls Henry Norwood & Wade Foster, The Cove Shawn McCullough, Golden Arrow Solstice Run/Walk, Amprior The Godfreys, O'Reilly's Pub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas Market, Almonte Classic Holiday Movie, Perth Jazz Night w/Spencer Evans Trio, The Cove Jimmy Tri-Tone Band, O'Reilly's Pub Karaoke, Bridges Bar & Grill Poetic Justice Band, Golden Arrow Splash'N Boots: Jingle Boots, Perth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Free Holiday Skate, Beckwith
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brea Lawrenson, Golden Arrow Classic Holiday Movie, Perth Head over Heels, The Cove Lanark Laughs, Carleton Place River City Junction, O'Reilly's Pub Bridge Club, Amprior Canada 150 Year-End Jamboree, Smiths Falls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas Bird Count, Lanark Highlands Classic Holiday Movie, Perth Free Holiday Swim, Carleton Place Karaoke, Bridges Bar & Grill Logan Brown & Taylor Angus, The Cove New Year's Eve Family Fireworks, Beckwith Rag Bag Cabaret, Almonte Ted Lalonde, Golden Arrow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NYE Dinner/Dance, Almonte A Turpin's Trail New Year's Eve, The Cove Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Dance w/Eddy & The Stingrays, Perth New Year's Eve Dinner/Music, Perth New Year's Eve w/Jimmy Tri-Tone, Golden Arrow The Brockolees NYE Party, Perth

Valley Voices Xmas Concert, Dec 10, 7PM. w/Bells of St. Paul's. \$15: Baker Bob's. Almonte United Church. See FB

Carols for Christmas, Dec 14, 7:30PM. St. Andrew's Church, Pakenham. 624-5593. Offering to LC Food Bank

Scott Woods Old Time Xmas, Dec 15, 7PM. CP Arena. 256-9010. \$25/\$10

Service of 9 Lessons and Carols, Dec 17, 7:30PM. Choirs of St Paul's & St James. St. James' Church, Perth. 267-1163

Trad Song Pub Session, Dec 17, 2-4PM. Join in. Anyone can lead. The Barley Mow, Almonte. 355-5552. dpbaril@gmail.com

Perth Citizens' Band Xmas Concert, Dec 19, 7:30PM. w/The St. James Four. St. James' Church, Perth. 256-4221. \$5/\$10

A Xmas Celebration, Dec 22, 7PM. St. Andrew's Church, Pakenham. mike@mikemccormick.ca. Freewill offering

Cadence, Dec 22, 8PM. 4 men, 4 microphones, no instruments. Station Theatre, SF. 283-0300, smithsfallstheatre.com. \$30

Canada 150 Year-End Jamboree, Dec 29, 5pm-12am. Jenny Whitely, Joey Wright, & more. SF Legion. \$20, Eventbrite

Dance w/Eddy & The Stingrays, Dec 31, 8PM-1AM. Tix: 267-1475. Perth Civitan Hall. 267-1475. \$30

New Year's Eve Dinner/Music, Dec 31, 8PM-12:30AM. Perth Manor, 264-0050 x2, perthmanor.com. \$85

The Brockolees NYE Party, Dec 31, 9PM-1AM. Farrell Hall, 186 Gore St. E., Perth

Community

Good Grief Walking Group, Mondays, 10:30AM. 299-8866. Almonte Library

Amprior Bridge Club, Mon-Thu-Fri 12:30PM (excl Dec 8, 25). 447-7526. priorbridgeclub.ca

SF Bridge Club, Mondays 7PM, Tuesdays 1PM. 256-4747. Smiths Falls Legion

Almonte Bridge Club, Wednesdays 7PM. 256-4747. Almonte Legion

Chocolate Party, Dec 2, 10AM-3PM. Choc Alley Bistro. The Granary, CP. granary.com

40 Plus Singles Dinner/Dance, Dec 2, 7PM dinner, then dance with DJ. Cash bar. SF Civitan Hall. 285-5557. \$10/\$15

Gifts of Light Gift & Bake Sale, Dec 2, 10AM-2PM. Sponsored by L'Arche Amprior. Kirkman House, Amprior. 623-7323x123

Heritage Perth Christmas House Tour, Dec 2-3, 10AM-3:30PM. Tix: Home Furn. (Perth), Crush (Alm), Blossom Shop (CP). Perth. 267-7817. \$30

Mill Workers' Memories, Dec 2, 2-4PM. Documentary. Textile Museum, Almonte. 256-3754, mvtm.ca. \$10

North Pole Express, Dec 2-3, 11AM-4PM. Train rides, Santa. \$8 from rmeo.org. Railway Museum of E. On. SF. 283-5696, \$8

Xmas in CP House Tour, Dec 2, 3-9:30PM; Dec 3, 10AM-4PM. Carleton Place. 257-9717, christmasincarletonplace@gmail.com. \$25

Book Club: Christmas Stories, Dec 3, 2PM. Lanark Learning Centre, Lanark

Lanark County Memorial Service, Dec 3, 5-7PM. "Getting Through the Holidays", candlelight ceremony. Community Home Support, 5 Bates Dr., #4, CP. 267-6400 x28

Victorian Family Christmas Party, Dec 3, 1-3PM. 1PM/2PM tours. Heritage House Museum, Smiths Falls. 283-6311

Pub Listings — p.29

Hackberry Men's Shed: Dec 5 & 19, 7:30AM (breakfast, Gourmet Restaurant, CP); Dec 11, 7PM (meeting, Shed opposite 98 Donald St., CP).

Green Drinks, Dec 5, 5:30PM. Informal meeting of environmental folk. Golden Arrow, Perth. Perthgreendrinks@gmail.com

CP Hort: Potluck, Dec 6, 6PM. Zion-Memorial Church, CP. See Facebook

Carleton Place Library: **Social Conversation Circle** (Dec 6 & 20, 1PM); **Craft Club** (Dec 18, 6:30PM); **Meditation Club** (Dec 21, 6:30PM). 257-2702, carletonplacelibrary.ca. Free

Xmas Open House w/Joshua Hyslop, Dec 6, 6-9PM. Equator Café, 451 Ottawa St., Almonte. 256-5960, equator.ca

Festival of Trees, Dec 7 (1-8PM), 8 (9AM-8PM), 9 (10AM-6PM). Raffle: trees, gift baskets, & more. OSO Hall, Sharbot Lake. 279-1303

MMPL Travelogue: Eclipse & U.S., Dec 7, 7PM. Rick Scholes. Almonte Library. 624-5306, kpillsworth@mississippimills.ca

Christmas Craft Sale, Dec 9, 10AM-3PM. Lanark Learning Centre, Lanark

Jingle Mingle, Dec 9, 2-4PM. Cup of cheer, goodies. ABC Hall, Bolingbroke. abchall.ca

Lanark Co. Genealogical Mtg, Dec 9, 12:30PM. Potluck, AGM. Beckwith Municipal Complex, CP. lcginfo34@gmail.com

Outdoor Lessons & Carols, Dec 10, 4PM. W/ potluck at Centennial Hall. St. James Anglican Church, Franktown

Carol Sing, Dec 11, 7PM. Xmas basket donations welcome. Lanark Learning Centre

Parkinson's Support Group, Dec 11, 1PM. Community Home Support, Perth. 1-800-565-3000x3425

W. Carleton Garden: Potluck, Dec 12, 6:30PM, w/silent auction. Carp Memorial Hall. wcgc.ca. \$5 for non-members

Women's Business Group Lunch, Dec 12, 12PM. RSVP at womensbusinessgroup@gmail.com. CP Terrace. 250-9282

Friends Forever Club Potluck, Dec 13, 12PM. ABC Hall, Bolingbroke. 273-4832

Toastmasters, Dec 14, 7-8:30PM. Riverview Seniors' Residence, CP. 250-9282

Xmas Luncheon, Dec 14, 12PM. Reservations req'd. Galilee Centre, Amprior. 623-4242, debbie@galileecentre.com, \$18

Customer Appreciation Party, Dec 16, 10AM-5PM. That's the Spirit, Almonte. 256-6322

Xmas Open House, Dec 16, 1-4PM. Live music, treats, displays. CP & Beckwith Museum, CP. 253-7013. Free

Christmas Bird Count: Dec 16 Rideau Ferry (700-9233), Dec 26 Pakenham/Amprior (mfnc.ca), Dec 27 CP (mvfn.ca), Dec 30 Lanark Highlands (mvfn.ca)

Olde Time Community Caroling, Dec 17, 6PM. 414 Richmond Rd., Prospect. 257-1539, twp.beckwith.on.ca

Free Holiday Skate, Dec 17 (w/ Santa), 24, 28 1-2PM. Beckwith Rec Complex. 257-1539, twp.beckwith.on.ca

Dickens' Dinner, Dec 17, 3PM. Fundraiser. A Christmas Carol reading; dinner. Galilee Centre, Amprior. 623-4242, \$40/\$25

Solstice Run/Walk, Dec 22, 6PM. Entry forms/tix at Galilee Centre, Amprior. 623-4242. \$15

Christmas Market, Dec 23, 10AM-4PM. Food, gifts, hay rides, kids crafts. Rock-n-Horse Farm, Almonte. rocknhorsefarm.ca

Perth Community Xmas Day Dinner, Dec 25, 12PM. Rides avail. Code's Mill, Perth. 326-8365, perthcommunitychristmasdaydinner.org. Free

Free Holiday Swim, Dec 30, 1-2:30PM. CP Pool, 257-1539

NYE Dinner/Dance, Dec 31. Dancing to Limit. \$60 adv. at nye@almontecivitan.com. Almonte Civitan Hall

Christmas Spirits, Good Spirits and Distilled Spirits

Check it Out at Perth's "Top Shelf" Craft Distillers

In the beginning was the wort. And the distiller saw that it was good. And so it came to pass that the wort was fermented and begat a beer which became heated and yea, yielded up its spirits to the still. And the still in its turn purified the spirits of beer into alcohol which begat whiskies, whiskeys and other delights.

by Sebastian Weetabix

Not quite that simple though. The origins of beers and wines are lost in pre-history, but distillation is a relatively recent innovation, requiring as it does a significant technological infrastructure for its practice. The earliest records of distillation (by alchemists) date to around the beginning of the Christian era, but distillation for beverages was not developed for a few centuries more. To the extent that there are recorded descriptions, it seems that the technology originated in the Middle East or in China and then moved to Europe. By the 15th century it was in widespread use, as evidenced by tax records. The history of distillation and taxation are closely entangled, partly as a consequence of the ability to transform mundane farm products into high value liquid assets... which brings us to Perth and Top Shelf.

Officially designated the "Perth Military Settlement" in 1815, according to <beautifulperth.com/history>, by 1836 Perth had a population of one thousand, as well as eight taverns, seven stores selling liquor, three distilleries and a brewery! Canada's experiment with prohibition of alcohol was less extreme in its results than the Volstead Act in the United States, but effectively ended the productive lives of Perth's distilleries. Fast forward to the 200th anniversary celebrations of Perth's founding, and the emergence of an entrepreneurial team with a unique set of skills, drive and shared interest in reviving the historical tradition of local distilling.

Hanna Murphy, co-founder and Distillery Operations Director, has deep roots in Perth and is dedicated to sourcing ingredients locally (not just corn and rye, but also distinctive local products such as maple syrup and apples). Her background includes management of a high-

performance sports team. Doubtless the liquor business will offer her ample opportunities to use all her skills. She teamed up with John Criswick, a serial entrepreneur with capital and interests in, among other things, the retail liquor business.

Together they have put in place a well-organized and well-staffed enterprise. Even a short visit to Top Shelf (and tours are encouraged — just book in advance!) impressed Weetabix with the enthusiastic energy of the team. This is a young company with a keen sense of itself and its opportunity. Andy Hawkey, a New Zealander, is the head distiller. He trained as a chemist and is now a seasoned start-up manager. Nothing like learning about plumbing on the job! He is joined by Garrett Kean, a biochemist. Both share a passion for flavour. Making neutral spirits (basically alcohol) is just the beginning. Together with a group of supporting technicians, they manage the exacting process of converting grain into finished products with distinctive qualities and flavours via fermentation, distillation, blending and aging. The blending stage is where distinctive products such as Top Shelf's award-winning gin are created, and aging in appropriately selected barrels is the key to making whisky and whiskey and even bourbon.

Like the rest of Top Shelf, Murphy is new to the business of spirits but certainly not lacking in spirit. After deciding to enter the liquor trade, she spent over a year learning about key aspects of the business and regulatory environment. Not only is a significant amount of capital required; there are major regulatory obstacles to be overcome. Equipment must be in-hand before an approval is granted, and the paperwork is arduous. The legacy of prohibition is the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, an agency charged with managing the commercialization of vice and enforcing a tax regimen on spirits that is significantly more onerous than that applied to other alcohol products. Weetabix fails to understand why alcohol distilled from grain is treated differently than alcohol in beer, although both are distinguished from alcohol made from grapes (as long as it is not distilled!).

The still itself is an imposing structure with a lot of plumbing attached. Production of finished goods is about 1,500 litres weekly and goes primarily to vodka, gin and "shine". Whiskey, by law, needs to



Just in time for the holidays, Weetabix takes a spirited look at Perth's Top Shelf Craft Distillers

be aged for three years or more and Top Shelf just started production in 2015. A single malt release is in the works. The water used in the process is highly purified and neutral; much is made of water sources — most of it to create virtue from necessity. Weetabix is impressed by the straight-up approach of the folks at Top Shelf in all respects.

The production of "shine" involves more than just adding flavour after distilling — the still itself must be run within carefully defined limits to produce a product that is not only palatable but also free of some natural byproducts (such as acetaldehyde, which causes severe hangovers). There is quite a lot of art in running a still properly, and Andy and Garrett have learned a lot; it comes through in their products. Raw from the still, blending and flavouring are done in small batches, and bottling and labeling are semi-automated. If you care to think about it, handling a few thousand bottles per week involves a lot of labour, but the scale does not call for much in the way of automation. Labels are applied to bottles by hand.

When you go to visit Top Shelf, don't look for one of Perth's renowned limestone structures. It is located out in an industrial park. The building is well signed and quite utilitarian. Inside is a store which has an attractive display of products and a convivial tasting bar where you can get (small) samples of products in the interests of education. Their signature gin has won an international award and they clearly are starting to make a mark in the world of craft distilling. Remember to drink responsibly and often.



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Plunge for The Table!

25th Annual Perth Polar Bear Plunge to Support The Table Community Food Centre

Thanks to the hardworking volunteers at the Perth Legion, 2018 will mark 25 years of plunging in Perth on New Year's Day. Over the years, the Perth Polar Bear Plunge has grown from just a handful of participants to 85 plungers and countless onlookers who came out in support of Lanark County Interval House on January 1, 2017. In total, over its history the plunge has raised \$274,563 for local charities. This year, on the plunge's 25th anniversary, the Table Community Food Centre is excited to see if they can break the record of plungers and funds raised to support their mission to provide good food for all.

At 8AM on January 1, 2018, participants will assemble at the Perth Legion, full of anticipation and excited to leap into the icy water of the Tay River. First, the lucky plungers will eat a healthy and hearty breakfast made by The Table CFC's talented staff. Spectators and supporters are also welcome to breakfast as well.

Nourished by their breakfast and having received a safety briefing, they will be set for the main event at 10AM. Many participants plunge in teams with matching outfits, while some go solo and steal the

show with fancy jumping moves. Others keep things simple and are just happy to accomplish their goal of getting in the water. Plungers then warm up with hot beverages and wait for the awards and prizes.

Not only is this a fun event, but it's also a great way to enjoy New Year's Day with your friends and neighbours while supporting a great cause. All proceeds are going to the Table Community Food Centre's programs that use the power of good food to build health, hope and community.

All are welcome to participate in the plunge. A minimum of \$25 in pledges is required. The Table has posted a number of tools and suggestions to support individual and team fundraising efforts that will make it possible to reach much more ambitious fundraising goals.

If you don't plan on partaking yourself, you can pledge a plunger or a team, or just donate to the overall effort online.

All the information you need for this year's plunge is available at <thetablecfc.org/plunge>. You can also email <plunge@thetablecfc.org> or call 267-6428 x8. For more information on past Perth Polar Bear Plunge fundraisers, visit <perthpolarbearplunge.ca>.

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Sivarulrasa Gallery's 3rd Anniversary Show

Almonte's Sivarulrasa Gallery celebrates three years of operations and growth with their anniversary celebration on Saturday, December 2 from 3-6PM. The 3rd Anniversary Show, which runs to December 30, features works by sixteen artists from Almonte, Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, and Halifax, as the gallery grows to include representation of artists across Canada. The show includes works small and large, including paintings, drawings, photographic works and sculpture. Everyone is welcome to attend and enjoy live piano music by special guest Michael Costello.

The gallery is located at 34 Mill Street in Almonte, and more information can be found at <sivarulrasa.com>.

Artists participating in this show include Sue Adams, Sarah Anderson, Deborah Arnold, Russell Baron, Carly Belford, Adrienne Dagg, Dale Dunning, Barbara Gamble, Jim Hake, Jane Irwin, David Kearn, Gayle Kells, Susan Low-Beer, Sanjeev Sivarulrasa, Susan Tooke and Mirana Zuger.

VIGIL, the newest work by Almonte-based sculptor Deborah Arnold, will be featured in Sivarulrasa Gallery's 3rd Anniversary Show



The Reeve Report

... And into the Woods We Go...

Twenty-three years we've been here, and we never tire of walking our trails and discovering something new. We often talk about the restorative power that nature offers, but on rainy days it's more appealing to look out than go out.

by Glenda Jones

However, there is a magnetic draw that we can't resist. (Well, all right, I didn't have trouble resisting in the summer when the mosquitoes were the size of buzzards!) We don the rain gear and the rubber boots, and take the reluctant dogs even on days not fit for man nor beast.

What can be so appealing? It's the same trail we walk every day. Actually, it isn't, because things change every day. Sometimes there are new branches down, a tree is across the path, the pine needles are ruffled up, a marker stump has fallen over, the moss is greener. We see wild turkeys and owls, blue jays and woodpeckers. Right now we are watching the last of the fall geese high overhead, and one poor befuddled robin who can't get his Garmin to work so he can head south. Some days the sun slants through the branches, other days the mist hangs on the pine trees like tear drops.

What was an Oriental carpet of colour a couple of weeks ago has already become a cushion of earthy browns. The oaks are the only trees still rustling with rusty leaves, and the forest floor is littered with pine cones. It's now that we appreciate the forms of the trees, the spread of the oak compared to the upright ironwood and the fat beech trunks.

There is a particular aroma in the woods depending on the season. In the spring, I swear we can smell the earth's rich fecundity, just waiting for new growth. The summer air is sharp — green leaves and citrusy. What can be better than chewing a stem of grass as we walk along? The fall smells like jam to me. The beech and maple leaves give off a sweet aroma that mingles with the orange scent of prickly ash.

So now we're waiting for the first real snow to make the forest a different place

altogether. When the branches droop over our trails, when snow falls down the back of our necks, when the dogs are chest-deep in the drift, the whole scene changes and we see the shapes and shadows as if for the first time.

We never take our woods for granted. While Alan was away for three weeks, his only request was to get home and walk in the woods again. He could hardly wait to set out along the path, and instantly, he seemed to be better. Within days, he was walking the whole perimeter of the woods, looking for the changes he'd missed, and simply standing and drinking in the full drama that Mother Nature was presenting. There is a tranquility in the woods that transcends all the medication in the world for lowering stress and balancing our lives. Worries soar above the tree tops, and life's problems come into focus when we step into the woods. We come out renewed and energized.

Our trails are open to anyone who feels in need of restoration. We are happy to go along for the walk; we are happy for people to discover their own beauty in the woods. To stand in the quiet and look around and know that these woods have nourished growth for hundreds of years, that the rocks are exactly where the glacier placed them, that the trees have grown up of their own accord, often on bedrock that shouldn't even support them. Trilliums, violets, lilies, hepatica, give way to maple seedlings that give way to grasses and vines, all in the appointed time throughout the year. Even in the depths of winter, there is life in the woods, just waiting to be discovered.

We are humbled to be the custodians of these woods, and we never take them for granted. They are our Christmas gift, birthday gift, anniversary gift, and more of a treasure than we could ever buy. So no shopping for us: just a stroll through the woods!

To all my dear readers who sent their condolences for Alan, please know we love each and every one of you. Your good wishes went a long way to his speedy recovery, and we appreciated them all. Life returns to what passes for normal, and every day we are thankful to be able to enjoy it.



Above is a section of the Jones's trail called "Belle's Choice". Glenda writes: "We have discovered the perimeter trail is 1.2K and takes about 25 minutes; longer if you stop and admire stuff. A person could walk for at least two kilometres and not be on the same trail twice. Every trail is named, either for grandchildren, pets, or sentimental locales.

There are also hidden gems, if a person knows where to look."

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“I Don’t Flush” (and You Shouldn’t Either)

Cool it. Scrape it. Green bin it.

Consumers are being asked to take a closer look at how they dispose of their fats, oils and grease — commonly referred to as FOG.

The Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) and the Clean Water Foundation (CWF) have teamed up to launch the I Don’t Flush 2017 public awareness campaign. The campaign is now in its third phase, with earlier emphasis encouraging the proper disposal of waste pharmaceuticals, followed by the proper disposal of personal hygiene products.

Bringing the issue to the forefront with a cheeky approach to what should and shouldn’t be flushed down our pipes, the newest campaign includes a PSA urging the public to cool it, scrape it, green bin it.

or milk cartons and left to harden, then scraped into the green bin.

Residents who do not have a green bin can throw FOG in the trash or consult their municipality for further options.

“The bottom line is that improper FOG disposal hurts your wallet and the environment,” says Amy Lane, Manager of Marketing and Communications, OCWA. “The I Don’t Flush campaign highlights what happens when you put FOG down the sink or toilet. When FOG cools, it can form blockages in pipes and sewers. In turn, these blockages can lead to costly basement flooding and sewage overflows onto streets and surrounding areas.”

The improper disposal of FOG (especially when combined with flushing personal hygiene products) not only leads to costly repairs, but also has a larger impact on local wastewater facilities. Canadian municipalities spend more than \$250 million a year removing garbage from sewer systems, according to the Municipal Enforcement Sewer Use Group.

“It’s extremely important the public understands that sinks and toilets are not garbage cans,” adds Christopher Hilken, President of the Clean Water Foundation. “As seen in recent news reports, ‘fatbergs’ are causing major blockages in sewer systems around the globe. These massive blobs of FOG and personal hygiene products like wipes can lead to sewage overflows that pollute our natural environment. We all have to do our part and be careful about what we put down our drains.”

To view the full PSA, and for more information about the Ontario Clean Water Agency, the Clean Water Foundation and participating supporters, visit <idontflush.ca>. More information can also be found on Facebook, and you can join the conversation on Twitter at #idontflush2017.



Don't flush the FOG! (fats, oils and grease...)

After a meal, allow any leftover FOG to cool in pans and then scrape into the green bin. Examples of FOG include meat fat, butter and margarine, milk and cream, sandwich spreads, salad dressing, and sauces and gravies. Liquid FOG can be poured into containers such as tin cans, empty coffee cans

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 Thu. Dec. 7 **Handmade Hearts Holiday Market** (Local Vendors, Apps & Music by **Logan Brown & Taylor Angus**) 6-9, \$15
 Fri. Dec. 8 **A Shawn McCullough & Wade Foster Christmas** 7-10, Buffet & Show \$35+hst
 Sat. Dec. 9 **Healy & Orr Rock 'n Roll Christmas** (Rock 'n Roll, Brockville) 7-11, Buffet & Show \$40+hst
 Fri. Dec. 15 **Xmas Classic Rock** with **Tony Silvestri Band** feat. Tom Savage, 7-11, Buffet & Show \$50+hst
 Sat. Dec. 16 **A Jeff Callery Christmas** (Folk/Rock, Brockville) 7-10, Buffet & Show \$35+hst
 Fri. Dec. 22 **A Henry Norwood & Wade Foster Holiday Hoe Down!** (Country, Perth/Westport) 7-10, \$5
 Sat. Dec. 23 **Annual Christmas Eve Jazz Night** with **Spencer Evans Trio** (All Styles of Music!) 9-11, \$5
 Fri. Dec. 29 **Head Over Heels** (Acoustic Folk, Gananoque) 6-9
 Sat. Dec. 30 **Logan Brown & Taylor Angus** (Acoustic Soul, Perth) 6-9
 Sun. Dec. 31 **New Year's Eve 2018 with Turpin's Trail** (East Coast/Folk, Kingston) 7-1AM, Buffet, Show, Party Favours + Bubbly \$50+hst

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A Birder's Eye View

Seven Swans A-Swimming...

Join the Christmas Bird Count!

Each year that goes by we seem to experience more change in all areas of life, and the birding world sure has seen huge changes. In some of my recent speaking engagements I referred to it as the runway effect: everything runs along fairly consistently, gaining momentum, then all of a sudden — lift off — and we suddenly notice large changes.

by Bob Volks

Birds are staying over winter that normally don't, we're finding others in non-traditional areas, and so on. Climate change and severe weather around the world, like we had this fall, are adding fuel to the fire of change, that's for sure.

Recently I was doing some research and decided to look in some of my older field guides, from the 1970s. Comparing that information to newer editions, I wasn't surprised to find vast differences in the data and historical bird ranges.

But where and how is that data collected? Obviously, many dedicated professionals are collecting information on a regular basis; however one really important source is the annual Christmas Bird Counts that take place locally. Numerous dedicated bird count volunteers have been collecting, reporting and documenting for many years. If you are looking for a fun and exciting way to get outside and take part in birding studies over the holiday season, Christmas Bird Counts are a great way to discover some of your favourite birds.

Dating back to 1900, this 117-year tradition is now conducted in over 2000 locations across North America, Latin America and the Caribbean. With help from thousands of birders, these observations have been added to an international database illustrating the distribution and numbers of winter birds from year to year.

This observational activity began around the turn of the 20th century, as conservation was in its infancy and as more and more bird enthusiasts and scientists began to be concerned about declining populations in



Photos by Sally Hansen

their areas. An early officer in the Audubon Society, Frank Chapman proposed a new holiday tradition in which groups of participants (27 members at the time) began a "Christmas Bird Census" that has since blossomed into the annual Christmas Bird Counts that take place between December 14 and January 5 annually. Many families have adopted this annual activity as a tradition, now being passed down through generations.

Whether participants partake in the count for the entire period or only a day or two, each member contributes significantly to the conservation of our feathered friends. The Audubon Society, Bird Studies Canada, and a number of other organizations use the data collected to aid them in assessing the strength of certain species, as well as furthering the ongoing work of conservation and habitat creation.

If you, your family or friends are interested in taking part in a local bird count, there are several in this area that are steeped in history, including:

- Macnamara Field Naturalists' Club: December 26 in Pakenham/Arnprior <mfnc.ca>
 - Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists: December 27 in Carleton Place, December 30 in Lanark Highlands <mvfn.ca>
 - Christmas Bird Count: December 16 in Rideau Ferry, contact Rosemary Anderson at 700-9233
- The Christmas Bird Counts were formerly funded by member fees, but now operate strictly on donations. If you would like to donate and be an integral part of bird studies, research and conservation, you can do so via the Audubon website's donation page <audubon.org> or through Bird Studies Canada's donation page <birdscanada.org>. If you're looking for more information or have any questions, feel free to connect with us at Gilligallou Bird <gilligalloubird.com> — we're happy to help.

— Bob Volks can often be found at Gilligallou Bird, Inc. in Almonte's Heritage Court <gilligalloubird.com>.



Gifts for Outdoor Enthusiasts

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- Quartz Co. made-in-Canada parkas, Vamos Outdoors \$650 & up

Local Brewery Can't Fill Cans Fast Enough!

After being under construction once again this past summer, Perth Brewery is excited to announce the completion of its second major brewing facility expansion. This latest expansion allows the brewery to produce 2.5 times its former capacity in order to keep up with rapidly growing demand in the region. In addition to the outstanding support from local communities and businesses, the recent approval of Perth Brewery's second permanent LCBO listing (Last Duel Lager), along with seasonal listings Summer Squeeze Citrus Wheat and Cascader Invader Wet Hop, means even more of their beer will be flying off the shelves.

The new expansion adds three new 60 bbl fermenting tanks and a 30 bbl brite tank. That's a massive 21,000L of added production capacity. With this expansion comes an improved retail space and, most importantly, a brand-new pub-style tap room, which now allows the brewery to serve pints on the premises.

In response to the continued local support from the region, Perth Brewery is excited about continuing to increase its involvement in community-level events and initiatives. A few of this season's events were the Perth World Record Kilt Run (June 24), Perth Ribfest (June 28–30), Calabogie Blues and Ribfest (Aug 18–20), and the Ottawa Craft Beer Fest (June 16–18), where they won the People's Choice award for favourite brewery in 2014. The Perth Brewery is also in the midst of setting up a bursary through The Perth and District Community Foundation, which will be funded by proceeds from their locally-farmed Cascader Invader IPA. The hops for this beer are picked fresh from Arklow Farm just outside of Perth, one of Perth Brewery's many efforts to collaborate with local small businesses.

For a complete list of events and charities that the Perth Brewery is involved in, or to learn more about the brewery, please contact Jeremy Steeves at 264-1087, email <jeremy@perthbrewery.ca>, or visit <perthbrewery.ca>.



Since being under construction this past summer, Perth Brewery has increased its brewing capacity — and also added a pub-style tap room so they can serve pints on the premises!

Gifts that are Made in the Valley

- Jewellery designs by Gwen Pappas, Virginia Ross, Lisa Healy, Bittersweet...\$30-300
- Milkhouse tomme or feta sheep's milk cheese, Foodsmithsvarious
- Maple Mustard/Glaze, Fulton's Pancake House.....\$11
- Barnboard bird feeders, Gilligallou Bird Inc.....\$150
- Sterling silver & gold "Lily Pad" ring w/ garnet & diamonds, Kehla Design.....\$1540
- Mary Cook's "The Best Job in the World", Mill Street Books.....\$25
- Recycled seatbelt wallets & bags by Mariclaro, MVTM Gift Shop.....\$60-130
- The Lanark County Sampler, Ottawa Valley Gift Baskets.....\$64.95
- "Provenance of the Stones" historic mystery, Patricia Josefchak.....\$25
- The 12 Beers of Christmas, Perth Brewery.....\$35
- Gift Card for a custom metal photo product, The Silver Shingle.....various
- Works by regional and Canadian artists, Sivarulrasa Gallery.....various
- Beautiful leather or silk jacket, Strévé Designs.....\$115-695
- Made-to-order acrylic headbands, Tranquil Weaver.....\$30

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season!



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UPCOMING EVENTS
Check Website or Facebook for further details on events

Friday, Dec. 8 - Dinner & Music to Dine By	Sunday, Dec. 24 - Open for Gift Certificate sales only!
Saturday, Dec. 16 - Radio Show at Lake 88 Listen live	Closed December 25 & 26 Make your reservations for New Year's Eve on Sunday, Dec. 31
Sunday, Dec. 17 - Traditional Christmas Dinner Reservations recommended	Closed: January 1, 2, 3 & 4 Open: Friday, Jan. 5/18

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Learning In Almonte Launches New Term

Courses in Historical Murders & Skeptical Skills

After a blockbuster fall term, Learning in Almonte will start two new courses in January. Fresh from lecturing in Berlin, local Emeritus Professor of Psychology Warren Thorngate will unravel the mysteries of fake news — how to decide what really is news and what is filler (or worse). Entitled “Bagging the Bull: Skeptical Skills in an Age of Misinformation”, the course promises to offer Professor Thorngate’s usual blend of dry wit and valuable information. The daily news will never be the same again.

Retired teacher Paul Marland, who treated the fall session to the inside stories on British monarchs, had agreed to continue in the new year with: “Killer Course: an Exploration of Murders Real and Fictitious”. Paul is promising more than the usual Jack the Ripper stories. For instance, there is the case of the Black Dahlia — is there a local connection here? Paul is an entertaining presenter

with encyclopedic knowledge of his subjects, so this will be an exciting session to attend.

The lectures are presented over six weeks in two-hour sessions. Professor Thorngate’s lectures will commence January 16, and run for six consecutive Tuesdays, while Paul Marland’s course will begin January 25, and run for six consecutive Thursdays. Lectures are held in the Almonte library meeting room starting at 1:30PM. The room is easily accessible.

The cost of each course is \$75, payable the first day of the course. Please see <learninginalmonte.ca> for additional details and to be placed on the mailing list for up-to-date information. Because space is limited, participants are required to register beforehand by emailing <cmapsimon@gmail.com>. Registrations are now being accepted for both courses.

— Glenda Jones

Gifts for \$25 & Under

- Set of George VI pennies 1937-52 w/ collector folder, Alliance Coin.....\$9.95
- Gift certificates, Crooked Mile Brewing Co.....\$10-25
- Equator t-shirts, Equator Coffee Roasters.....\$25
- Premium ice grippers (free for folks 65 & older), Get A Grip.....\$25
- Blue Q soft combed cotton socks, The Green Counter.....\$17
- “Snowflake” peg doll, crafted by Little Wool, The Grotto.....\$16
- Theraband FootRoller, Hands on Healing.....\$20
- Minature quilted items by Nadine Sculland, MVTM Gift Shop.....\$2-7
- “Provenance of the Stones” historic mystery, Patricia Josefchak.....\$25
- Kitchen gadgets galore, Pêches & Poivre.....\$25 & up
- Branded merchandise, Perth Brewery.....various
- Use of iHeart monitoring device, Circa 1894 B&B & Spa.....\$20
- Gardening gloves & hand tools, Reid Gardens.....\$10
- Cozy Smartwool socks for him and her, Vamos Outdoors.....\$21.99 & up

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10:00am to 4:00pm
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To make a referral to the PCO program please call 1-844-726-5115. For more information, please contact Meredith or Sarah at North Lanark Community Health Centre, (613) 259-2182.

North Lanark Community Health Centre

Getting into the Festive Season in Perth

I submit to you that there are two sorts of people in Canada: those who love December, and those who would rather drink a keg-sized vat of sizzling bacon fat than welcome in winter. If you self-identify as a proud member of the latter hibernating clan, I hear you. You, my friend, are not alone. Crank the space heater, pull those warm blankets snugly up to your chin, and settle in with a nice fat stack of Stephen King novels. We'll see you in March. The rest of you, come along now: let's get festive!

by John Pigeau

As the holidays approach, things get pretty darn jolly in the pretty old town of Perth. There is a lot to celebrate, after all, and celebrations start early with a trio of seasonal events.

The Studio Theatre kicks off the holly jolly season with a production of the enduring and much-loved *A Christmas Story*, which opened in late November and runs until December 10. And don't forget that McMartin House will host the **Nick of Time** Artisan show on December 2 from 10AM to 4PM, featuring high quality, one-of-a-kind gifts made by skilled local artisans. And no one should miss the **Santa Claus parade** at 5PM that evening, with its cleverly-themed, brightly-lit and festive floats, happy holiday songs, free smiles and candy canes — topped off by a special appearance by Mr. and Mrs. Claus. Bundle up, kids — you won't want to miss a minute of this magical night.

The next night, a special show at the Perth Tea Room promises a bit of magic, too, as the Listening Room Series presents **Irish Mythen**. A crowd favourite at the 2016 Stewart Park Festival, Irish returns to Perth with her powerful blend of contemporary folk music and a more traditional Celtic sound. The result, it's been said, is "timeless and transcending." The Irish-born Canadian folk artist has played a slew of major international music festivals, sharing the marquee with the likes of Lucinda Williams, Lyle Lovett, Rod Stewart and Gordon Lightfoot. The night will also mark the 40th wedding anniversary of series founders Steve and Susan Tennant, so why not join them to celebrate?! The show starts at 7PM. Advanced tickets (\$20) can be purchased by calling 267-7902.

Also in early December, with families in mind, Barn Door Productions presents its stage version of the enchanting and timeless *Cinderella* at the Full Circle Theatre. The "English panto-style" comedy promises an all-new script filled with lots of laughs and silliness, plus crazy costumes and colourful scenery, as well as some special effects "magic". The show, which stars a cast of nine including Don MacKay, Ashley Pitcher and Brian Atterbury, with Miranda Wilson as Cinderella, will most certainly be a fun and entertaining holiday treat for kids, parents,

and grandparents alike. *Cinderella* runs December 1, 7 and 8 at 7:30PM and December 2, 3, 9 and 10 at 2PM at Perth's Full Circle Theatre. For tickets — with special family-oriented prices — call 267-1884 or visit <barndoorproductions.ca>.

Throughout December, it should be noted, you can wander on down to Perth's **Crystal Palace** and take in the delightfully decorated Christmas trees that celebrate the magic and nostalgia of the holiday season. The Crystal Palace will be open from 5-7PM on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights until the New Year.

For many, one of the most pleasant ways to get into the holiday spirit is by enjoying the wondrous music of the season — especially when it's performed live. On Sunday, December 10, the **Men & Women of the Tey** will help you feel that infectious Christmas joy when they present their annual Christmas concert at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. Choir director Shelley McLaren says this year's program should be their best to date, and she's delighted the choir is returning to the spectacular acoustics of St. John's. In the spirit of Christmas, the concert is free, and it begins at 2PM.

There will be more merry music and cause to rejoice on Tuesday, December 19 as the **Perth Citizen's Band** plays its annual Christmas concert at St. James Anglican Church. This year marks the 25th year of the band's holiday concert, which will feature Perth's Town Crier Brent McLaren, and jazz from an earlier era from The St. James Four. The concert will also include sacred and popular songs for all ages. Admission is \$10 for families or \$5 per person, so bring the family, a friend, or a neighbour. The festivities start at 7:30PM.



Barn Door Productions will be putting on the panto *Cinderella* just in time for the holidays

There's a wonderful concert for the kids coming to the Studio Theatre. The entire cast from the popular television show *The Big Yellow Boot*, including Splash 'n' Boots, take the stage for their first big holiday show on Saturday, December 23. **Jingle Boots — A Big Yellow Boot Holiday Show** sounds like a whirlwind of fun for the entire family, especially the little ones, as they can join all their favourite characters — including Splash, Boots, Charlie, Keys, Jumping Jack Granny, and Chef Brock Lee — for one big festive sing-along and dance party, featuring holiday favourites and songs from the hit TV show. There will be lots of dancing and laughter, too. Tickets are \$23.50 and available at Tickets Please, online at <ticketsplease.ca> or by calling 485-6434. Chef Brock Lee will be accepting non-perishable food items, which will be donated to The Table, Perth's food bank. There are two performances: 11AM and 2PM.

If you're looking for something fun to do on New Year's Eve, the Perth Civitan Club will be hosting a dance on December 31 featuring the rockin' sounds of **Eddy & The Stingrays**. For anyone who wants to rock their way into the New Year, tickets are \$30. But don't dilly-dally, as tickets sell out fast. To get yours call Carol Buchanan at 267-1475.



The St. James Four (above) will join the Perth Citizen's Band on Dec. 19

Or you may wish to ring in the New Year in fine style at the **Perth Manor Boutique Hotel**. They are offering an elaborate seven-course dinner accompanied by live music by pianist Valerie Leavitt, with cocktails and party favours in the elegant Tapestry Dining Room, and a champagne toast at midnight. These celebrations are very popular, so tickets (\$85 plus tax) must be reserved in advance by calling 264-0050.

To all celebrating, I wish you a very Merry Christmas — and a healthy, happy New Year too.

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Kids of all ages won't want to miss Jingle Boots — A Big Yellow Boot Holiday Show. Fortunately, there will be two shows in Perth on December 23.



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Tickets / Billets:

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Keep an eye on our website for other December events.

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