

# the Humm

free

Arts,  
Entertainment  
& Ideas



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## Looking for More in 2024?

Since you're reading theHumm, I'll wager that you're always on the lookout for more. More vibrant and engaging performances. More personally curated and enticing local shops. More connection through community groups.

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# WHAT'S UP WITH THIS "WINTER HUMM"?!

If you've been watching this little corner of theHumm for the past few months, you may already know that we changed up our distribution schedule for the first time this year. But in case you missed it, we've decided to combine our usual January and February issues into one extended "Winter" issue, which comes out in mid-January and covers you right through to Leap Day (February 29).

We assure you that we will return to our normal monthly schedule with our March issue though! If you are looking to add something to our calendar of events or submit a press release for that issue, the deadline is Tuesday, February 20. If you'd like to advertise in March, that deadline is Thursday, February 22.

If you have something going on in February and you missed the deadline for this issue, please email us at <editor@thehummm.com> and we'll see if we can include your event in an edition of our weekly Hummail e-newsletter. Want to subscribe to Hummail? Send an email to the same address and we'll tell you how you can do so!

Having published this paper for the past 25 years (it's true!), we gotta say that we really enjoyed not working over the holidays, so we'll probably continue to publish a Winter issue in future years. There's not usually a whole lot going on in early January, and we think our advertisers appreciated us not pestering them through their busy holiday time.

We hope all our readers, advertisers and contributors had a wonderful holiday season, and we wish everyone a happy and healthy 2024!

— Kris and Rob Riendeau

## Thank You, Humm Patrons!

Welcome to our newest supporters: **Darren Brocklehurst**, who joined theHumm's Production Crew; and **Anne Mokros**, who became a Humm Patron. We truly appreciate your support and that of all our patrons!

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Who's Reading theHumm

Joanna Majewski recently sent in this wonderful photo and wrote: "In 2018, **Kasia Majewski** was visiting Florence, Italy. She took a break from sightseeing in the famous Boboli Gardens and was reading theHumm under Tindareus Cracked, a sculpture created by famous Polish artist Igor Mitoraj. Kasia is now in Inuyama, working on her PhD in biology and reading theHumm in Japan."

All the best to you Kasia, wherever you are in the world!



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

### Submissions

By email or on disk.

### Content Deadline:

20<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication

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### Thumm's up this month to:

Almonte luthier **Linda Manzer**, who was recently appointed an officer of the Order of Canada. theHumm was lucky to have Linda's gorgeous guitars grace the cover of our 2014 issue, and if you've seen us driving around in the Hummmobile, it's got her work featured along one side. Congratulations, Linda — what a well-deserved honour!

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January 27



**Creative Writing Circle**  
Almonte Readers & Writers  
**MM Public Library, Almonte**  
February 1-22



**Sleuth**  
presented by  
**Studio Theatre Perth**  
February 8-18



**Alcohol Ink Workshop**  
with Pam Stewart  
**CP Gallery, Carleton Place**  
February 17



**Valentine's Dinner**  
4-course dinner  
**Stonefields Estate**  
February 14 & 17



**Oliver Jr.**  
by the Mississippi Mudds  
**Carleton Place Town Hall**  
February 23-March 2



**The Grand Author Takeover**  
Book fair and author signing  
**Grand Hotel, Carleton Place**  
February 22-24



**Jesus Chris Superstar**  
by Orion Theatre Co.  
**St. Paul's United, Perth**  
February 23-March 3



**Nathan Sloniewski**  
presented by Folkus  
**Almonte Old Town Hall**  
February 24



**Pianoman**  
Tribute to Billy Joel  
**Farrell Hall, Perth**  
February 24



**Jules**  
Mississippi Mills Film Society  
**St. Andrew's, Pakenham**  
February 25



**C.A. & Sonny**  
Part of the Art House Music Series  
**CP Gallery, Carleton Place**  
February 29



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March 9

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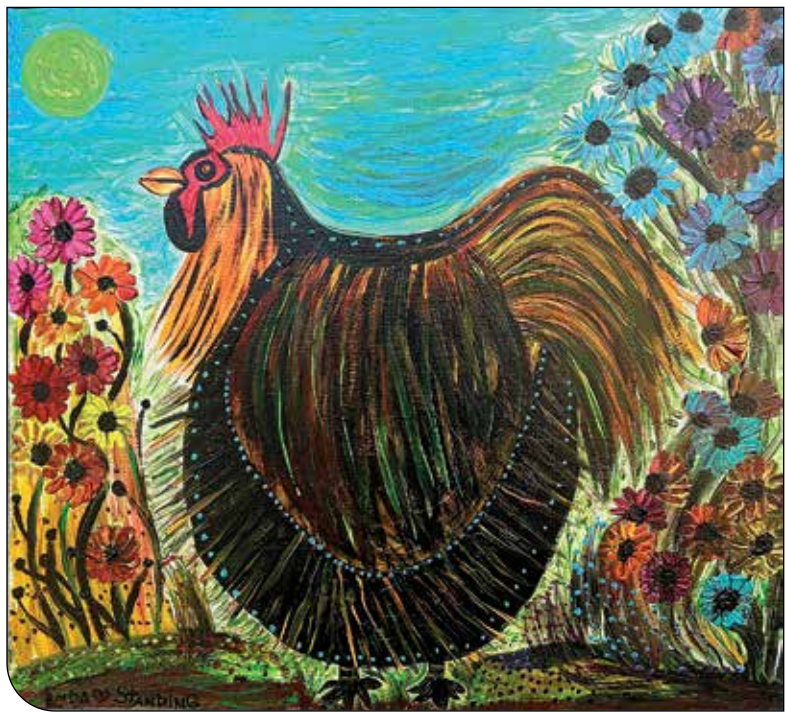
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# Linda Standing – Canada’s Emerging Folk Artist

Linda Standing is truly outstanding in her field. She is a folk artist in the truest sense of the word. Her website says it best: “I am a traditional, self-taught folk artist. I paint everyday life of pioneer ancestors and country folk.” She paints straight from the heart, as she has done since she was a child living in tough circumstances, finding solace in imagining and portraying “the serenity and beauty of the countryside, with people and animals living harmoniously together.”

by Sally Hansen

Her paintings are genuine folk art, encompassing all the characteristics of the genre. She has never taken an art class. She doesn’t even own a computer. Her works display an artistic naivety that sets them apart



from “fine art,” eschewing formal rules of perspective, scale, shading, proportion, etc. But she gladdens your heart with her innocent scenes of everyday country life from an earlier era.

Close contemplation of one of her paintings is like snuggling under a warm, soothing down comforter on a chilly evening. When a passerby stops at her booth at the Bytown Antique and Vintage Show, or notices her cheerful, colourful scenes at Queens Crafters and Antique Market in Carleton Place, you can bet a smile will soon appear.

### The Real McCoy

Authenticity is hard to fake. Linda doesn’t have to try. Her backstory is living testimony to the incredible power of artistic creativity to make life worth living. We humans are very creative, and when life gets too tough, we have come up with a panoply of antidotes. Art is one of the healthiest coping mechanisms, because it nourishes rather than depletes. Linda

explains: “Every painting tells a story; it is a story that comes from my creative visions and imagination. When I paint, I immerse myself in my paintings and imagine that I am part of the scene.” The more artists’ stories theHumm has explored, the more convinced we are that pursuing art is one of the, if not *the*, best ways to survive soul-crushing circumstances.

Standing’s childhood was characterized by neglect and trauma. One of seven children, her learning difficulties were not accommodated either at home or in a one-room school housing eight different grades. She jumped the schoolyard fence and ran away regularly. Fortunately, she had two special gifts: she was musical and she loved to paint. Her maternal grandfather, James Ireland, was her biggest fan. He owned the first restaurant in Carp, where young Linda entertained guests by tap dancing and singing. When she was only eleven years old, she was offered a singing contract after winning a series of CJOH “Take a Bow” talent contests. Her parents declined on her behalf. Decades later her singing voice is intact, and her art just keeps flowing.

Her grandfather collected art and antiques as he peddled his wares around the countryside, and he nurtured Linda’s love of artmaking with enthusiastic encouragement and by providing her with house paints. An instinctive folk artist, she painted on anything she could get her hands on — walls, boards, even sheets. She has Amish roots on her mother’s side, and has worked baling hay, driving a tractor and baking pies; all of which inform and inspire her idyllic visual stories. Life, however, remained painfully challenging over several decades.

### Discovered Again

This time it wasn’t a talent show. About five years ago, Dorothy Waterman spotted Linda’s distinctive folk art when she went to Linda’s home to pick up some antiques. Dorothy was an antique dealer in Almonte; Linda had been supplying her with antiques she had collected in her forays around the countryside and in Ottawa, following in her grandfather’s footsteps as a peddler/recycler/discriminating garbage picker. Waterman recognized Standing’s exceptional talent and became a patron, providing her with real acrylic paints and buying planks from Home Depot and old cupboard doors from the Restore in Ottawa to use as canvases. Most importantly, she convinced Linda that she was a true artist.

Dorothy is to Linda what his brother was to Van Gogh. Three years ago Dorothy rented a space at the Queens Crafters and Antique Market in Carleton Place to showcase Linda’s distinctive paintings, and they started to sell. A lot. Two years ago Irene



Chahley joined Linda’s fan club, creating a website and promoting her work through social media. Irene had majored in art history, and like Dorothy, recognized the exceptional natural talent that nurtures Linda’s soul and brings her peace. Creating art is an exceptionally effective mode of therapy.

Last year Linda became a member of the Merrickville Arts Guild and participated in the collective’s past four shows. She also participated in the Arnprior Tarts and Arts Festival in ’22 and ’23, and in the Bytown Antique and Vintage Show. Encouraged by the sales of her paintings, she has become more confident in her abilities and more prolific, creating more than 300 paintings over the past three years.

Dorothy and Irene are convinced that Linda Standing is an undiscovered folk artist of importance and are committed to promoting her work. As humanity lurches into an AI-threatened existence, Standing’s nostalgic scenes of a simpler, more human existence may well grow in appeal to a wider audience. A recent article at <news.artnet.com> predicting the impact of AI on the art world mentioned that the Industrial Revolution had sparked a renewal of interest for “the handmade, for craft production — and for the imagined romance of pre-modern times.” It also suggested that the value of antiques might go up as a result of AI.

Canada’s most famous folk artist was Maud Lewis, who shared many of the obstacles that Linda has faced. If Maudie’s commercial trajectory is prophetic, we should all dash in and treat ourselves to a Linda Standing folk art painting. A Lewis painting found in 2016 at an Ontario thrift store sold in an online auction for C\$45,000. Right now Linda Standing’s cheerful, heartwarming depictions of a kinder, gentler, less technologically-suffused world are deliciously affordable. Her coordinates appear on the back of her Artist Trading Card at the top of this page.


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**WHO** Linda Standing  
**WHAT** Folk Artist  
**WHERE** Queens Crafters and Antique Market,  
 142 Bridge St., Carleton Place,  
 <folkartpaintingscanada.com>,  
 <mag-artists.ca/home/artists/linda-standing>  
**WHEN** Now through February at Iron Forge Pizza,  
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I was a seller and in need of a quick sale. Through word of mouth, I found the right realtor for my situation. Joanne is obviously well connected, and a quick sale is what I got. Beyond the connections, Joanne went above and beyond to assist in this difficult process. Since I am from out of town, she made visits to the house to take on some tasks that we normally would have done. I can't say enough about Joanne as a person. She was very pleasant to work with and communication between us kept me up to speed with all items to do with the sale. She had my trust from the moment I met her. I would highly recommend Joanne to anyone who is looking for a realtor.

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# The Mudds Youth Present *Oliver Jr*

By Nancy Keech

"Consider yourself" invited! The Mississippi Mudds Youth are excited to present this year's production of *Oliver Jr* at the Carleton Place Town Hall. This timeless musical, based on Charles Dickens' classic novel *Oliver Twist*, promises to captivate audiences of all ages with its heartwarming story, memorable characters and show-stopping musical numbers.

We had almost 70 youth audition this year and have a fabulous cast of 35 between the ages of 7 and 17 ready to entertain you. From the innocent and optimistic Oliver (Maren MacDonald) to the charismatic scoundrel Dodger (MacPherson Lowry), the orphan gang children will charm you with numbers like *Food Glorious Food* and *Be Back Soon*. In the darker side of London, the cunning Fagin (Holden Anderson) will teach you to *Pick a Pocket or Two*, and the warm-hearted Nancy (Alex Levstek) will break your heart with the ballad *As Long as He Needs Me*.

Directors Nancy Keech and Linda Beigle were excited to take on a classic show this year, and have enjoyed the energy and enthusiasm of their young cast. "Youth theatre is about so much more than the show," they explain. "It's about the community the kids



Tickets to the Mississippi Mudds Youth production of *Oliver Jr* are selling so well that an additional matinee has been added on February 24.

Above, Nancy (Alex Levstek) consoles Oliver (Maren MacDonald), while Dodger (MacPherson Lowry) looks dodgy at left...



build, and the opportunity to grow and learn. This year's group has been amazing in mastering some complex choreography and blocking. There are a couple of numbers that are worth the price of admission alone!" The directing team has appreciated the expertise of Ivy Mackay, who choreographed several of the big numbers.

The incomparable musical director Laurel Tye has brought her traditional "sparkle" and helped all of the kids find their voices. The set-building crew and a talented team of scenic artists, led by Cathy Boynton and Glen Anderson, have been hard at work transforming the stage into 19<sup>th</sup> century London. The costume team, led by Judy Wemyss, have outdone themselves in creating some unforgettable Victorian looks.

The production is set to run from February 23 to March 2 with both matinee and evening shows available. As of press time, an additional show has been added on February 24 at 2PM. Producer Rhonda Bell would like to let everyone know that tickets are going fast, and so should be purchased as soon as possible from Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434). We hope you come on out to "Review the Situation!"

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# Road Warrior: Jack de Keyzer

Acclaimed guitarist, singer, songwriter, band leader and producer Jack de Keyzer rarely sits still. With 12 records, 1 DVD, 2 JUNOs and 7 Maple Blues Awards, de Keyzer delivers the goods wherever and whenever he plays. He has performed with the likes of Bob Dylan, Etta James, Otis Rush, John Hammond Jr., Ronnie Hawkins, Duke Robillard, Ronnie Hawkins, Bo Diddley and Blue Rodeo. He usually plays over 100 shows a year, and his music is steeped in Chicago blues, London England blues rock, Detroit Motown, Muscle Shoals deep soul, Memphis rock and roll, and Philadelphia's funky soul jazz. For 50 years — or roughly a couple million miles — de Keyzer has been hitting the road to bring his brand of guitar-driven blues around the globe.

by Seamus Cowan

On January 19 and 20, Jack will be playing back-to-back nights in Westport as part of the Blues at The Cove series, so I caught up with him to find out what keeps this road warrior rolling.

**Seamus Cowan: You have been doing this for so long, releasing all kinds of material and playing with a who's who of famous blues musicians. What allows you to keep it fresh and gripping?**

Jack de Keyzer: This year marked my 50<sup>th</sup> year as a professional musician. I feel like learning music offers infinite possibilities. I never get tired of learning songs, writing songs, performing them, practising the guitar, practising vocals and working on lyrics. It's the most amazing job I could have and I'm very grateful to be able to do it!

**Your career took you so many places during the fertile live blues and rock music scene in North America. Tell us about some of the most influential experiences that have stuck with you, on or off the stage.**

I started my career with Richard Newell (aka King Biscuit Boy), who had great success in the blues world in the 1970s. Biscuit Boy had one of the world's largest blues record collections, so when we were driving to shows he'd play cassettes in the car and I learned so much about all the different styles and great artists. It was a real education.

My next professional gig was with Ronnie Hawkins and The Hawks. With Ronnie, we played everything from country to rockabilly to blues and even some folk music, so it broadened my musical vocabulary. The other thing I learned from Ronnie was how to run a band and how to interact with fans and people in the biz. Probably my next greatest influence was when I joined the rockabilly band The Bop Cats in the early 80s. That's when I first got signed to a record label, started writing and learning how to write songs, and learned how to record and put on a very high energy show. There have been many more influential people and musicians in my career, but those three are the seminal ones.

**Being a touring musician gives you an opportunity to see the world. What is one of your favourite places to play across this great globe of ours?**

I have travelled a lot. Ultimately though, you don't get to see that much, as most of it is from a car or airplane window! So it's the gigs that I really find memorable. To me any place that's full of people having a great time is my favourite place to play, and The Cove ranks right up there.



Winner of multiple JUNO and Maple Blues awards, Jack de Keyzer brings his signature blues sound to The Cove Inn on January 19 and 20. His shows usually sell out, so get your tickets soon!

**Like you, during my musical career, I have become a family man. You tour so much though! How do you make it work with your family?**

I do play a lot of shows, but have been a family man for a long time now so I focussed on keeping my career as close to home as I could. I had some offers to travel farther and wider, but I didn't like the commute. A lot of my shows were driveable, even if we got home at 4AM. I just wanted to be back there for my kids in the morning. I used to joke that when my kids were little, they didn't think their dad worked because I would leave at 7PM, often just before their bedtime and even if I got home at 3 or 4AM, I'd be up at 7AM to see them off to school!

**You have accomplished so much in your life, musically and personally. What is next for you?**

My latest project was recorded during the darkest days of the pandemic, when we weren't allowed to leave home! I recorded a bunch of songs that have now been released on an album called *Solo*. A lot of the songs are country blues, Delta blues, and songs from masters like Leadbelly, Robert Johnson, Blind Lemon Jefferson and a few surprises. It's about the roots of the blues and the roots of most of North American and popular music. I live and love it!

**A perennial favourite in Westport, Jack's shows usually sell out in advance, so reserve yours now by calling 273-3636 or emailing <thecoveinnwestport@gmail.com>.**

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David Bird (left, as Andrew Wyke) and Patrick Bugby (right, as Milo Tindle) are playing at more than chess in this scene from *Sleuth*. The popular thriller opens at Studio Theatre Perth on February 8.

# Sleuth: Let the Mind Games Begin!

By Ben Bennett

*Sleuth*, which tells the story of an older man who seeks revenge on his wife's lover and the fun and games that follow, opens at the Studio Theatre in February.

Set in the English stately home of celebrated mystery writer and games enthusiast Andrew Wyke, the plot follows his plan to lure his wife Marguerite's paramour into a trap... and the battle of wits that results. It's an ingenious story, with more twists and turns than a country road.

Andrew invites the younger man, Milo Tindle, to his house on the pretext that he has some urgent issue to discuss with him. It soon becomes clear why he is there and that both men know about the affair — indeed, Milo says he wants to marry Marguerite, despite Andrew's many disparaging remarks about the lady, who, he says, "converses like a child of six and makes love like the abominable snowman".

Andrew claims that he too has an extra-marital partner and boasts about his prowess in the bedroom. In a mock interview about Milo's prospects that is clearly designed to humiliate him, Andrew brings out and makes great play about Milo's Italian and Jewish heritage and the fact that he has little money with which to afford Marguerite's expected lifestyle.

But the older man also has a solution to the problem: stage a robbery.

By stealing the substantial amount of jewellery in the house, Milo will be able to afford that lifestyle and Andrew can recoup its value with an insurance claim. The parry and thrust of the conversation that ensues as the details of the plan unfold includes a lot of humour, some of it quite dark. Andrew eventually persuades Milo to stage the burglary and explains exactly how it will be done. Then they rehearse it. Or is it a rehearsal?

Written by barrister-turned-playwright Anthony Shaffer more than 50 years ago, the play opened in 1970. It was made into a very successful movie in

1972, starring two acting giants — Laurence Olivier as the writer and Michael Caine as the younger man.

*Sleuth* offers the full theatrical package. "The dialogue is witty, the energy is electric, and the plot is the ultimate game of cat and mouse," says director Jane Stott.

"There will be lots of physicality, but all will be done considering the safety of the actors and the audience — from special effects with bullet shots to choreography for fist-fighting," she says.

"After all, our actors and our stage props have to last for eight performances!"

Local audience favourite David Bird, fresh from reading *A Christmas Carol* on the Studio stage in December, plays Andrew, a role he has played before — albeit 20 years ago. "It's a wicked little play," he says. "I love the way it continuously redirects the audience."

The role of Milo is played by Patrick Bugby, who describes the action as "a roller coaster and a very entertaining series of events. It all boils down to 'play stupid games, win stupid prizes'. The reactionary nature of both characters and their need to win or one-up causes them to lose," he adds.

"Patrick is fabulous to play against," says David.

Costumer Marie Amyot has been looking after costumes for all kinds of plays and musicals in Perth over the years, most recently helping with *Nunsense*. Luckily, she has quite the collection stored in the barn at the farm where she lives. One of Marie's biggest challenges for *Sleuth* was finding the leopard skin coat the director wanted as part of the costume set. "After all," notes Jane. "This was the seventies."

The play opens on February 8 and runs until February 18, with Thursday and Friday performances starting at 7:30PM and Saturday and Sunday matinees beginning at 2PM. (NOTE: the Saturday shows are now matinees, not evening performances.)

Tickets can be purchased at the door or from Tickets Please ([TicketsPlease.ca](http://TicketsPlease.ca), 485-6434). For more information, please visit [studiotheatreperth.com](http://studiotheatreperth.com).

# Quiet On the Set! Mississippi Mills Film Society Winter Screenings

By Glenda Jones

Did you see *To Kill a Tiger* when the Mississippi Mills Film Society screened it in November? If so, you're on the inside track to know it has been nominated for an Oscar! That's evidence of the quality of movies the Film Society is acquiring for their monthly Sunday afternoon showings. There are more to come in the next three months — films that will amuse, interest and educate.

In February, the Society will chase the winter blues away with the poignant sci-fi fantasy *Jules* — a film that is touching, funny, and a tribute to feisty old age. How can it miss when it stars Ben Kingsley? *Jules* came out in the USA last summer to high acclaim,

and is now delighting audiences everywhere. What if that UFO landed in your yard?

That screening takes place on February 25 at 2PM at the United Church in Pakenham, with plenty of convenient parking and accessibility. Tickets remain at \$15 and are only available in advance through Tickets Please ([TicketsPlease.ca](http://TicketsPlease.ca), 485-6434). Seating is limited, so it's a good idea to get those tickets early.

The film for March 24 is *Eight Mountains*, and April 28 will feature *The Great Escaper* (not *The Great Escape*...). Once you've been to the February movie, you'll want to come back for these next two. Besides, the proceeds from these movies go to the Mississippi Mills Public Library. This is a community win/win project!



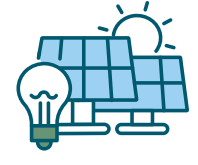
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An international group of authors will "take over" The Grand Hotel in Carleton Place on February 23 and 24 for panels, book signings, refreshments and shenanigans!

Bookin' It

**The Grand Author Takeover**

It all started with a video chat.

Author Sarren Scribner was chatting with three friends — Elisabeth Garner, Kimberly M. Ringer, and Tara Tappin, also independent authors — when they had a big idea. Basically, to create an event connecting authors and readers.

by John Pigeau

Then things sort of escalated, Scribner says.

"What started as a wild idea tossed out during a video chat has now developed into an author panel and a two-day international signing event connecting over thirty authors, cover models, and other bookish professionals with readers and fans," she explains.

The Grand Author Takeover, the event came to be called. Apt, since these storytellers will take over The Grand Hotel in Carleton Place on February 23 and 24.

Attending authors come from all across North America and write in pretty much every genre imaginable — sci-fi, mystery, paranormal, dark romance, young adult. Scribner says this was intentional.

"Absolutely! We wanted as many genres represented as possible. This way there would be something for everyone. We understand that most of the books that will be for sale are suitable for an eighteen-plus readership, but there will definitely be a wide variety of stories to be found."

The idea, she explains, was to make the weekend a unique experience for authors and readers alike. Scribner and friends posted a call to action on BookTok about the event, inviting authors to sign up. "We were ecstatic to have such a variety of talented authors respond," she says.

Now that it's all a go, The Grand Author Takeover will give readers a chance to find a new favourite author, discover some new genres, bond with other booklovers and enjoy the beautiful boutique hotel. Authors, meantime, will get the chance to network, meet fans and readers, network and hobnob with literary folks.

And The Grand Hotel in Carleton Place provides the perfect venue, Scribner declares.

"The Grand Hotel is a stunning wedding and events boutique hotel that is rich in history. The location was central, and the atmosphere was exactly what we were looking for. When we realised that the rooms were named after authors and poets, we felt that it was kismet."

One of the opulent suites at The Grand Hotel is named after the English poet and novelist Algernon Charles Swinburne. Another after Alfred Lord Tennyson, the leading poet of the Victorian age in England.

The three-night event kicks off with The Grand Introduction on Thursday, February 22 at the Carleton Place Gallery, just down the road from the hotel. "That event will feature nine authors reading excerpts from their upcoming works as well as a Q&A session," Scribner adds.

On Friday, things will get a little more intimate with a VIP night at which attendees can enjoy "a fun night of wine, charcuterie, adult sippy cups, a swag bag full of goodies and lots of laughs with the authors."

Friday's exclusive Gold Pass "shenanigans," which run from 6–8:30PM, also include a draw for a fantastic gift basket. A Gold Pass (please see below for details) allows attendees to access this event as well as Saturday's main event, The Book Fair and Author Signing, which includes authors, cover models and book professionals and influencers. The day will allow people to discover new books, engage in lively conversations, and get their books signed. There will also be individual giveaways including books, swag, and other goodies.

Saturday's events runs from 11AM to 5PM, allowing plenty of time to engage with the participants. "We are a wordy bunch who love to talk and look forward to meeting everyone," promises Scribner.

The Grand Author Takeover will also help support the charity First Book Canada, an organization that puts books into the hands of children.

"In conjunction with our events," Scribner explains, "we have also organised a charity anthology titled *Hear Me Out*, whose proceeds will also go to First Book Canada. The book is currently available for pre-order online and will be available for purchase at the event."

"The anthology consists of fifteen short stories where the norm is anything but," she explains. "Dashing prince rescues the damsel in distress? No way. It's the femme fatale who saves the day. When you go around flipping tropes, anything goes."

The anthology, a paperback, spans many genres and will be signed by attending authors. Organizers are donating proceeds from the sales to First Book Canada.

As their charity of choice, First Book Canada: "Transforms the lives of children in need by making brand-new, high-quality books and resources affordable and available to the educators and kids who need them most."

When you add it all up — a mix of fun-loving, creative authors mingling with die-hard readers and book lovers at a classy, luxurious venue — The Grand Author Takeover promises to be a smashingly, bookishly good time.

Authors spend a great deal of time alone when writing. Avid readers are often alone when nose-deep in a gripping book. I have a theory that when you put writers and readers together in the same room, something special happens. Something joyful. Which makes perfect sense given that both reader and writer share a deep and genuine appreciation for well-told stories.

I expect The Grand Author Takeover will prove this theory true.

Visit [thegrandauthortakeover.com](http://thegrandauthortakeover.com) for more information about the event, tickets, the authors and First Book Canada. Tickets are available at Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434).



# See How They Run

## Fast-Paced February Farce at The Station Theatre

Philip King's *See How They Run* is the first play in the Smiths Falls Community Theatre's 2024 season. This comedy is set in the idyllic village of Merton-cum-Middlewick, England, during the 1940s. It's World War II, and the inhabitants are preparing themselves for the imminent threat of Nazi invasion. Making light of a terrible situation, the play opened during the war and, according to Wikipedia: "The West End opening night was not without its perils. Three 'doodle-bugs' exploded nearby. No-one budged until after the play was over, but (actor George) Gee complained at the cast party that all three went off just as he was speaking his funniest lines."



Lionel Toop tries to assist Miss Skillon (the neighbourhood busybody who has found herself uncharacteristically inebriated) off the sofa and out of the house, while Ida the maid misreads the situation, in this scene from *See How They Run*

Get ready for an evening of side-splitting action involving the somewhat harried Reverend Lionel Toop, his feisty American wife Penelope (a former actress) and their cheeky maid Ida. Their home is filled with mayhem, not often seen in the sleepy little English hamlet of Merton-cum-Middlewick, as guests arrive unexpectedly and contribute to scenes of utter chaos. Lionel must placate Miss Skillon, the village busybody who despises Reverend Toop's wife and is extremely insulted that Penelope has dared to decorate the pulpit for the Harvest Festival, a task that has been hers "since time immemorial".

A surprise visit by Clive, a former actor friend of Penelope's who is now serving in the American Air Force, creates confusion and turmoil that is further enhanced by the arrival of her uncle the Bishop of Lax, along with the Reverend Humphrey who is supposed to be taking the morning service the next day. The escaped Russian spy who seeks refuge from the authorities just happens to make his way to the Vicarage and further adds to the mayhem.

The pace is furious as people dash in and out and the laughs are non-stop. You will recognize regular contributors to Smiths Falls Community Theatre, and they are very excited about welcoming some new members to their cast for this show.

The play runs for seven performances over two weekends, with 7:30PM shows on February 16, 17, 22, 23 and 24, and 2PM matinees on February 18 and 25. Tickets are available at Special Greetings, 8 Russell Street East in Smiths Falls, from 9-5 Monday through Saturday. You can also call the store at 283-2244 if you require special seating or are trading in Season Vouchers. Tickets can also be ordered online at <smithsfallstheatre.com>. Adult tickets are \$24, student tickets are \$10. The Station Theatre's full season of plays has something for everyone, and they are excited to start off with a bang with this fast-paced farce to shake off any winter doldrums!

## Call to Artists

Arts Carleton Place (ACP) is looking for 45-50 talented artists for their Fine Art Show & Sale, taking place on May 4 and 5. This will be a juried show, and will predominantly showcase wall art (oil, acrylic, aquarelle, charcoal, fibre, mixed media, watercolour, pencil art, photography, etc.). Other forms of fine art will also be considered, including pottery, glass art, jewellery, sculptures, metal and woodwork.

The decision of the judges is final, and a waiting list may be compiled. Some of the judging criteria may include visual appeal, originality, creativity, use of medium, degree of difficulty, due diligence, composition, use of colour, attention to detail and quality of presentation.

The competition in 2024 for vendor booths may be greatly increased compared to 2023. In 2023, 75 artists were accommodated, as it was held in the arena space.

This year the show will take place in the Upper Great Hall where only 45-50 spots are available. Please send quality images of your best current work.

Four booth sizes are available. All applicants must pay a refundable \$30 fee for helping with volunteer tasks.

Publicity for the Fine Art Show will include, at a minimum, 150 lawn signs, the traditional postcards distributed at partner events prior to the show, an ad in theHumm with an accompanying article, radio ads on Lake 88.1 and Ottawa's Move 100, and internet advertising on The Weather Network and Météo-Média. More than 75% of your booth price is being spent on advertising.

The application deadline is midnight on January 26. More information and the application form can be found at <artscarletonplace.com/2024-acpfineartsale>.

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**January + February's Events**

Every Sun **Eric Uren + Meghan Balogh** (Fiddle/Guitar Duo, Westport) 5-8  
Every Wed **Wings 'n Tunes** with **Shawn McCullough** (Country) 5:30-8:30  
Jan 19+20 **Blues at the Cove** with **Jack de Keyzer Band** (Toronto), 7-11 \$100 Dinner, Show + Charity  
Jan 26 **No Principals** (Classic Harmony Folk, Rideau Ferry/Westport) 5-8  
Jan 27 **Robbie Burns Day** with **Seventh Town** 6-10 Dinner, Show + Festivities \$70  
Feb 2 **Amanda Keeley** Trio (indie-folk), 5-8  
Feb 3 **Birds of a Feather** (Kelly Latimer + John Wilberforce, acoustic duo), 5-8  
Feb 9 **RJ LeBlanc's HEYDAY** (JUNO award, modern vocal Jazz, Montreal) \$80, 7-11  
Feb 10 **Valentines Sweetheart Table d'Hôte** with **Head Over Heels** 5-9  
Feb 16 **Blues at the Cove** with **River City Junction** (Brockville), 7-11 \$100 Dinner, Show + Charity  
Feb 24 **The Album Covers** (Classic Rock, Montreal) 7-11 Dinner + Show \$70

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# Toller Cranston: Ice, Paint, Passion

In the realm of figure skating and artistic expression, Toller Cranston stands as a Canadian icon whose accomplishments have left an enduring mark on the world of sports and art. Renowned for his revolutionary style on the ice and his artistic pursuits beyond the rink, the news of his sudden death in Mexico at age sixty-five came as a shock to fans from Canada and around the world. In her new biography *Toller Cranston: Ice, Paint, Passion*, his sister Philippa Cranston Baran has crafted “a celebration of his life, a tribute to the values by which he lived, and a road map for living fearlessly.” theHumm contacted Philippa to learn more about her book and its impending launch in Arnprior on March 3.

by Kris Riendeau

**The Humm: Let’s start with the local connection. After the official Canadian release of your book on February 20, you will be holding a special “hometown launch” at the O’Brien movie theatre in Arnprior on March 3. Tell me a bit about the history of the Cranston family in the Ottawa Valley.**

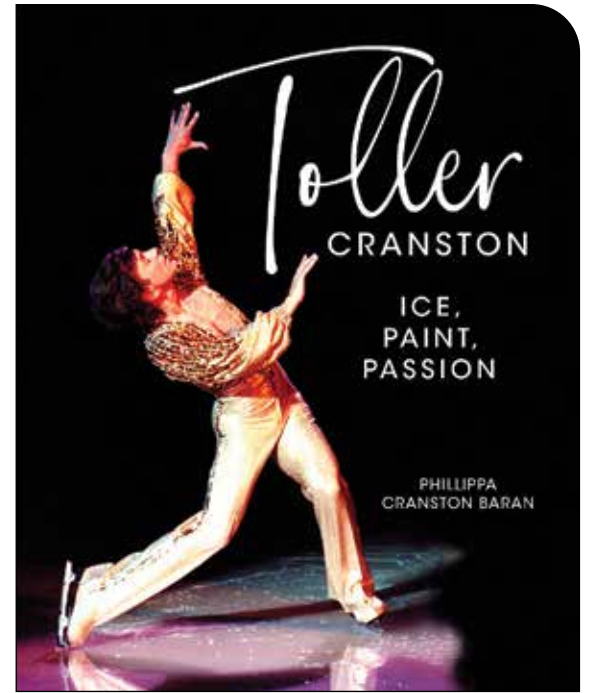
Phillippa Cranston Baran: Toller once said, “I remember skating in Arnprior. They had a new arena and my uncle Hugh, who had been the mayor, invited me. The building was packed. When you step on the ice in Arnprior, you perform exactly as you would in Madison Square Gardens — in a grand, crazy way. It was important to me to go all out the one time I skated in Arnprior. I really hope that twenty years from now, they’ll say, you know, one time I saw Toller Cranston come to skate in Arnprior and I’ll never forget it.”

That was 1977. In the decades since, I have met people who were in that rink at the Nick Smith Centre that day and they very much remember. In fact, everyone who ever saw Toller Cranston skate — in person or on television — remembers.

Beyond grand, crazy performance on the ice, there is deep family history with the Valley. My great-grandfather was the first doctor in Arnprior. My grandparents, Dr. Jim and his wife Mary Frances Toller, raised their five boys in the red brick house across from the library. We spent summers at the family cottage at Marshall’s Bay. We took swimming lessons from Mary Fran who was the best ever and by god, we learned to swim. There were picnics in the park and five cent double dip ice cream cones from the Merryside Dairy. And movies at the O’Brien where 25 cents would get you a ticket and a box of popcorn.

**Toller Cranston was known for pushing the boundaries of figure skating with his innovative choreography and performances, yet his life was filled with both triumphs and challenges. How did you navigate the delicate balance between celebrating his achievements and presenting a nuanced portrayal of his life, including any struggles or controversies?**

I knew that I could write about Toller as a little boy, and I could write about what it took to clear an estate property in Mexico of 18,000 things in 45 days, but I definitely could not write about figure skating judging (*Yes! He was robbed!*); or about the influences and themes in his paintings; or about his impact on people — gay, straight, famous, not famous. I didn’t try. What I did was reach out to individuals with the authority and experience to comment or explain. In the process of creating this book, more than 150 people contributed deeply personal, incredibly moving, and utterly authentic stories. There are icons like Joni Mitchell and Leonard Cohen, champions like Don Jackson and Brian Orser, and others who are not so well-known including skating fans and Toller’s Mexican staff. Collectively, the stories and pictures create a tapestry of the richness, depth and impact of Toller’s life.



Phillippa Cranston Baran will be launching her new biography of her brother Toller at Arnprior’s O’Brien Theatre on March 3

**quite provocative! Can you elaborate on a few of the major challenges you faced, and explain why you persevered?**

In dealing with Toller’s estate property in Mexico I did have to deal with corruption, extortion, and threats by gun-toting thugs. At one point, I was facing a civil suit, a criminal suit, an embargo on the property, unable to leave Mexico, unable to move forward, unable to make anything happen. One memorable day I found myself sitting in a park in Mexico with all my worldly belongings in a brown paper shopping bag — passport, money, papers, iPad. My Mexican lawyer, a wonderful man named Martin Martinez had told me the day before, “Sra, tomorrow there will be men coming to your house. You must not be there. You must take your things and do not return until evening.” At 8:00 in the morning, I found myself on a park bench. I was 69 years old. Alone. Miserable. In tears. Getting to a solution was difficult. Let me just say that arrangements were made. The word in Spanish is *gratificaciones*. It means bribes. So, yes, bribes were paid. That was tough. But in many ways, a bigger challenge for me was managing Toller’s estate in such a way that protected his reputation, his legacy and his relationships. Dismantling a property containing 18,000 things in 45 days was a challenge. Getting two 53’ containers of artwork and personal effects into Canada was a challenge. Writing this book was a challenge. Still, I can say that every single minute has been satisfying. Horrible, sometimes, but satisfying. What kept me on track was being committed to the goal and being clear about the end result. That, and the love and support of people who cared. I have emerged with more wrinkles and age spots but very deeply enriched. I wouldn’t change a thing.

**Toller is credited with having brought a new level of artistry to men’s figure skating and he certainly inspired generations of skaters, but he was also your brother. How would you describe his legacy?**

I am incredibly proud (and frankly astounded) at the impact Toller has had on other artists. There is a chapter in the book called *The Muse* that describes works of art in many different fields — painting, theatre, poetry, music, ceramic, skating of course, even needlepoint — all either inspired by Toller or made as a tribute to him. That is amazing to me. But I think what I am most proud of is his legacy as a human being — his courage, work ethic and creativity. That is the legacy he leaves for all of us. Inspiring people to dream big, do the work, live without fear and be creative now.

**What can people expect to see at the launch on March 3, and where else can they find your book?**

Just like the good old days at the O’Brien Theatre. A box of popcorn. Toller on the big screen. Lots of laughter, shared experiences, memories, and celebration. A pretty great way to spend a couple of hours on a Sunday afternoon. Copies of the book, brilliantly designed by Robert Hughes of Robert Hughes Design and Print in Arnprior, will be available for sale. *Toller Cranston, Ice, Paint, Passion* is also available from Amazon and local booksellers as well as by order from the publisher, Sutherland House Books <sutherlandhousebooks.com>.



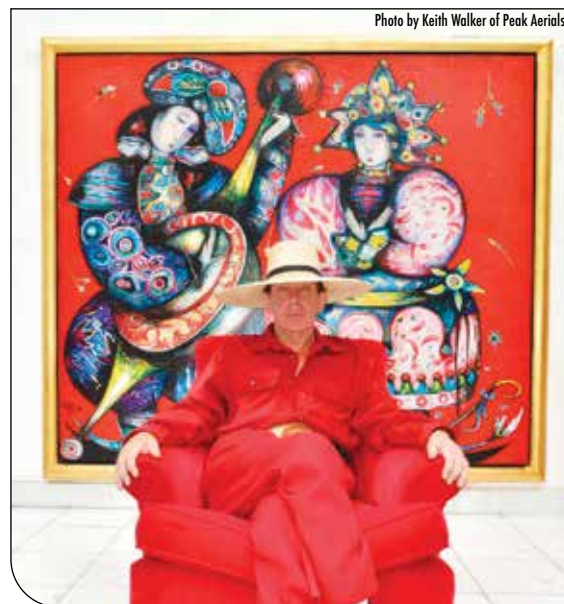
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**The jacket of your book states that you are: “understanding of his quirks, fiercely proud of his talent, and committed to sharing his story, albeit with more fidelity to the truth than he would have permitted if still alive.” Why is it important to you to divulge more about this iconic man than he revealed during his lifetime?**

As a script writer, I am used to telling stories in a way that that delivers a message through image, emotion and impact. I used the same approach with this book. The truth about Toller emerges from perspective and context. The video equivalent would be lighting, camera angles, setting and editing. Over the years, millions of words have been written about Toller or spoken by Toller in interviews and articles. The thing is, he rarely told the truth. He would embroider, distort or flat-out lie to make a point. What I set out to do in this book is present Toller Cranston from a variety of perspectives, a variety of angles. I tried to get the hard facts right. I tried to capture the authenticity and the spirit of my brother. The sparkle. The flamboyance. All of it.

**The book jacket also states: “In the process of writing this book, Philippa had to deal with corruption, extortion, and threats by gun-toting thugs. Like her brother, she is not a quitter.” That’s**



Orion Theatre Company blazes back onto the local theatre scene with *Jesus Christ Superstar*

# Orion Presents *Jesus Christ Superstar* A Fundraiser for The Canadian Cancer Society

*"If you strip away the myth from the man..."*

It's been ten years since Heidi Stepanek and Peter Dixon staged their last Orion Theatre Company production, *Les Misérables*, and now they are storming back on the scene with the show that shook the theatre world over fifty years ago with its first rock opera.

Orion Theatre Company started out in 2003 with a production of *Rocky Horror Show* — an event that is still talked about by those who were there. A semi-professional community theatre company that specializes in intimate productions of well-known Broadway musicals, Orion is known for presenting high-calibre productions highlighting many talented local actors, singers and musicians.

*Jesus Christ Superstar*, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyrics by Tim Rice, began as a concept album in 1970 before being staged the following year, and was then filmed by director Norman Jewison in 1973. Multiple stage adaptations have been produced as well as several filmed versions.

While early on the idea of turning the Bible into a loud, flashy, rock 'n' roll spectacle was often seen as sacrilegious, Peter and Heidi do not in fact view it as a mere re-telling of the biblical story, but rather a deep dive into some complex characters borrowed from that older story, and imagining them anew as individuals struggling with a very complex situation. It's a show full of questions — about politics and power, leadership and idolatry, fate and personal responsibility. It's a tragedy of Shakespearean dimen-

sions whose characters are caught in a time of political and passionate tensions.

And it rocks! The orchestra assembled for this production are top-notch and are being directed by past music director of the Quinte Symphony, Gordon Craig. Right off the top, *Jesus Christ Superstar* launches in with a heavily distorted guitar, setting the pace for the "rock" part of this sung-through musical, followed by a variety of musical styles from funk to acoustic ballads and everything in between — each one a classic — until the show's haunting finale.

For over fifty years, audiences around the world have continued to experience *Jesus Christ Superstar* as musically powerful, dramatically moving, and as relevant as ever. Heidi and Peter are excited to bring a new and original interpretation and approach to this fantastic show, which features highly talented performers and musicians from around the Ottawa Valley. And St. Paul's United Church in Perth provides a unique and beautiful backdrop with their recently renovated performance facilities.

Performances start at 7:30PM on February 23, 24, 29, March 1 and 2; and at 4PM on February 25 and March 3. For more information, please visit <musictheatre.ca/orion>. Tickets are available from Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434). In addition to the funds raised through ticket sales, there will be opportunities for people to donate directly to The Canadian Cancer Society.



Come celebrate winter (and have some delicious local food & drinks) at Back Forty Artisan Cheese on February 17

## Back Forty Winterland

Looking for a great place to gather, explore and celebrate on the upcoming Family Day weekend? Come out to Winterland, taking place on Saturday, February 17 from 11AM to 5PM at Back Forty Artisan Cheese! This unique and beautiful venue has become a favourite destination for those seeking great cheese, food, drinks and the outdoors. Head up to the farm in Mississippi Station to enjoy a fun-filled day of winter activities. After exploring the Back Forty, relax around the bonfire and enjoy some music with family and friends.

With multiple toboggan runs and over 5km of trails meandering through the farm's forests and fields, Winterland provides a great opportunity to get some exercise, enjoy nature, and reward yourself with some delicious food and beverage fireside, hot from the outdoor wood oven and grill.

The self-guided snowshoe trails provide fantastic views of the Mississippi River and the beautiful surrounding landscape. Visitors may bring their own snowshoes and toboggans, and snowshoe rentals will also be available onsite. New for 2024, customers will also have a unique opportunity to fuel up mid-hike, as "Cardinal Café" will be set up along the route serving up some delicious hot food and beverages.

For more Winterland details, please visit <artisancheese.ca>.



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# Folkus Features Local Lights in February

By Sandy Irvin

Although the January Folkus show featuring Tom Wilson and our March show featuring The Once have sold out, tickets are still available for our remaining shows!

On February 24, Nathan Sloniowski will be joined by musical friends for the release of his latest album, *the lost LOve letteR to a smAll town*.

Nathan tells us he first entered a music studio at the age of 16, guitar in hand, for a punk project inspired by an obscure Irish poet. His mission? To create and perform original music. Many bands, festivals, stages, and several decades later, he's still doing it. His latest project explores stories of the hippies, artists, eccentrics, sinners and saviours he credits with inspiring a life-long creative quest.

Nathan is a musical activist and pot-stirrer, ever-busy around town, known recently for sparking up the Almonte Song Circle as well as his work with The Ragged Flowers<sup>1</sup>, but he is also a co-founder of PorchFest de Mississippi Mills and is one of the original founders of Folkus<sup>2</sup>. Recently, Nathan organized a series of sold-out John Prine tribute evenings at Ottawa Valley Coffee Almonte, sharing the stage with Vicki Brittle, Tyler Craig and Jess Winskell.

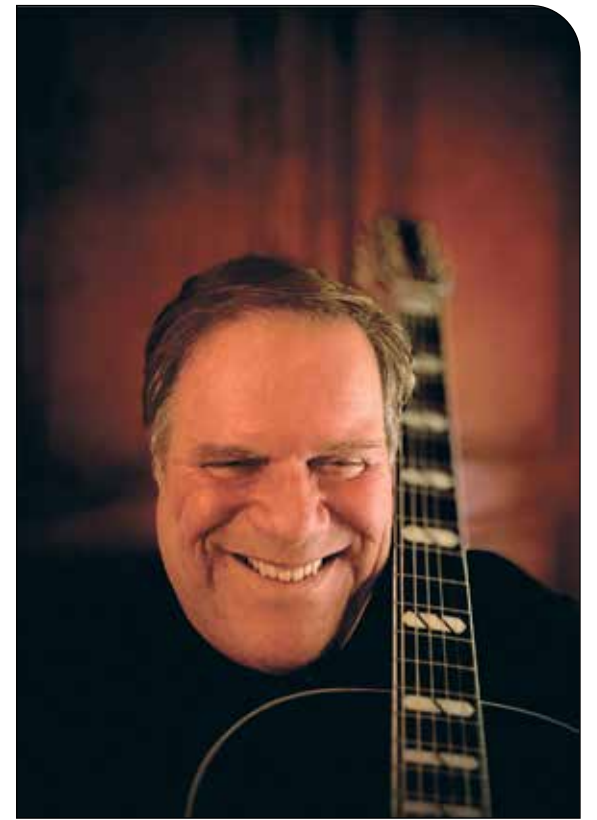
With Nathan's honey-bourbon voice, acoustic guitars and well-honed story-songs front and centre, *the lost LOve letteR to a smAll town* is a musical carousel that makes stops at cafés, dance halls, tree-lined fields and limestone quarries. It offers lyrical nods to many of his singer-songwriter heroes including John Prine, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan, Gordon Lightfoot, Blaze Foley, Townes Van Zandt, The Eagles and Gram Parsons.

Nathan's first solo album, *No Wicked for the Rest*, debuted in 2004. *The Ottawa Citizen's* Patrick Langston praised it as "a smart blend of folk, bluegrass and country that segues nicely from tracks about power and greed to more intimate tunes about love and its struggle to survive in a cock-eyed world." He played it in 2005 at Folkus, opening for the Rick Fines Trio.

In 2013, one year before Russia's invasion of the Crimean Peninsula that was the first offensive in a wider Russo-Ukrainian war, he released a single called *Orange Ribbon*, recorded in Lviv with members of Sample Rate, a Ukrainian alt-rock band. The song is dedicated to the courage of Ukrainian journalist Наталія Дмитрук (Nataliya Dmytruk) and is a testament to Nathan's Ukrainian heritage.

For his latest album, he enlisted long-time collaborator and record producer Ken Friesen, plus his own son Gabriel on engineering and mixing (youngest son Aaron created cover art for the project). They holed up together for three days and nights in the spring of 2022 at The Tragically Hip's legendary Kingston-area studio, The Bathhouse. With Ken's connections and a lax post-pandemic concert scene, they were able to recruit band members from Blue Rodeo (Jimmy Bowskill, guitars), Blackie and Rodeo Kings (John Dymond, bass), The Jim Cuddy Band (Steve O'Connor, keyboards) and Red Rider (Davide Di Renzo, drums). The recording session was, in Nathan's words, "this songwriter's trip of a lifetime. I learned so much from these fabulous musicians and we had So. Much. Fun." Throughout 2023 they added backup vocals with Gabe in Toronto and more of Bowskill's stringed spices to the mix with Ken in Almonte.

The result is a nine-song tribute to what Nathan calls "the collage of open-hearted dreamers who grew me up in the 1970s artistic lair of Elora, Ontario, and the many more I've met in other small towns along the



On February 24, Nathan Sloniowski will celebrate the release of his latest album on the Folkus stage.

He will be joined by Vicki Brittle on vocals, Barry Buse on bass, Bill Searson on drums and Blair Hogan on guitar. Almonte singer-songwriter Kentucky will open the show.

way." Those communities include Almonte, Wakefield, Calabogie and, as of 2023, Carleton Place, where he now resides with his wife Glenna Watts.

With his studio band spread out across North America on various tours, Nathan's rehearsing his Folkus performance with homegrown hand-picked Ottawa Valley players including Vicki Brittle on vocals, Barry Buse on bass, Bill Searson on drums and Blair Hogan on guitar. He's also hinting that a couple of more musical friends may pop up on stage too, saying "the opportunity to headline at Folkus is too good not to share, including with my opening act Kentucky, a 'new kid in town' as the Eagles like to say, who I met at Ken's studio one night and believe is a singer-songwriter force of nature who's got to be heard."

Kentucky, a newly local and newly solo singer-songwriter, has developed a dedicated and growing following from a year-long residency at Ottawa Valley Coffee Almonte. We are excited to have him take a bigger stage with us at Folkus.

Our shows are still held at in the Ron Caron Auditorium in the Almonte Old Town Hall. There's an accessible elevator you can reach from the side entrance. Doors open at 7PM this year, and showtime is at 7:30. There will be t-shirts and music at the merch table, with beverages and snacks at the bar. We have a Square for payment, but cash is never a bad idea.

Single tickets are now available through our ticketing partner, Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434), and this year we're not tacking on extra fees.

Please check <folkusalmonte.com> for any last-minute updates! We look forward to seeing you at our shows.

<sup>1</sup> A fabulous folklectic local outfit with a new EP on the way, featuring George Birchall, Ian Douglas, Steve Reside and Rob Riendeau. The Ragged Flowers helped launch Folkus into a string of sold-out shows in 2017.

<sup>2</sup> This means that we feel comfortable asking him to move chairs.



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# Frequent Flyer at the Hardware Store

Just when I think all my ducks are in a row, something in this house will need fixing. I'm really good at taking things apart, but sometimes putting them back together defeats me. That's when I reluctantly have to call my ever-so-helpful neighbour who never "tsk tsk" but can always remedy the situation.

by Glenda Jones

However, nothing gets done until I've made the trip to Home Hardware. I love going to the hardware store. I may not know exactly what I need, but the staff always finds me the exact right thing. I know where the furnace filters are, the carpenter glue, hinges, jigsaw blades, heat vents, light timers, screws, Barkeeper's Friend cleaner, Roundup and puzzles. You name it and I've been in there buying it at one time or another. I'm mad about buying batteries, and have a collection of AAs that reside in the fridge waiting for their next outing (there's a tip for you, gleaned from the woman on the cash!).

On a cold December day I wanted to clean the outside dryer vent. It stuck, so I gave it a gentle smack with my fist, and darned if the thing didn't break! Imagine: 29 years it's been there and now it breaks. Where's the quality, I ask you? It looked like a simple thing to repair, only needing the plastic cap. How long could it take? I only needed one screwdriver to get it loose, but I needed a small chisel to remove the caulking. Two tools!

Off to the store with old piece in hand. They found me the right size at the right price, and home I went. (Bear in mind each trip is 24km there and back).

The new piece was perfect. However, the pipe it needed to accommodate was the exact same size and no way was it going to fit. One more tool: pliers. But the pipe was wonky aluminum and bent out of shape instantly. By this time, I needed clippers to remove the flex hose piece too, which disintegrated as I removed it. Four tools, bent pipe, torn flex hose!

Back to the store. Why the staff didn't run when they saw me coming is a tribute to their patience with a half-knowledgeable repair woman. Since I'd destroyed the pipe piece I now needed the whole kit 'n' caboodle. Mr. Handyman assured me I'd be able to do this, so off I went again, all the pieces in one

box, instructions, aluminum tape, zap straps, and a chocolate bar for sustenance.

I got to Step 2, "insert pipe in plastic cap". This was the previous downfall! But before I destroyed the thing again, I threw it all in the car and once again trekked back to the store. Mr. Handyman popped that thing together like he'd done it a hundred times. He boosted my morale and sent me away again.

Surely the next step would be easy! Not so. I needed my hacksaw to enlarge the hole ever so slightly. With the help of the little hammer I got the vent in place. Six tools now and I was halfway done! Besides all this, it was cold, and I had to keep coming in to warm my hands. Love these repair jobs.

I soldiered on, determined to see this thing through. To attach the flex hose, I needed to remove a basement ceiling panel, haul out insulation dotted with mouse droppings, and carefully, carefully attach the flex hose

to the aluminum pipe, a very tight fit that was accomplished with minimal cursing and a lot of aluminum tape, which incidentally, sticks to everything it touches: hands, scissors, pipe, hose and loose insulation included.

The dog can't stand it when I go to the basement, so she rushed up and down, barking wildly while I was trying to balance on the stool and do all this. I had to pack the insulation back in the little space, being careful not to disturb my ever-so-elegant repair job. At least I didn't need any more tools.

I went outside to have a look at the whole thing, and what do

you know — it looked all right. I got out my caulking gun — one more tool! — and sealed the edges with no trouble at all.

I stood back and enjoyed a moment of self-satisfaction. Okay, it took me two hours, three trips to the hardware store, six tools and a whole pile of frustration, but I did it without calling my handyman neighbour, who declared he too was pleased I'd been able to do it by myself. Don, Mr. Handyman at the hardware store, was pleased to know his help paid off, likely because I wouldn't be back until the next thing breaks!

I love fixing things. I love the confidence the hardware store staff gives me to tackle tasks, and I also love my next-door neighbour who'll come and rescue me when things go awry.



# Come "TRI" With Us

By Catherine Cosstick

Have you ever wondered what it might be like to take other people out for rides in a bicycle built for three? Wonder no more; it's possible, it's fun, and if you can pedal a bicycle you can probably operate a Cycling Without Age trishaw.

Cycling Without Age started in Denmark and came to Lanark County in 2019. Under the leadership of Treff Peters, trained volunteers started taking seniors for (free) trishaw rides in Smith Falls and Carleton Place. The Trans Canada Trail, local parks, and rides along the river are favourites with our passengers.

Our passengers are seniors, persons with disabilities, and shut-ins who enjoy the opportunity to get outside, relax in a comfortable trishaw and participate in social interaction with the pilots. The pilots are the people who pedal the trishaw. It's not surprising that clinical research has shown positive physical and mental health benefits for both pilots and passengers.

All of our pilots receive (free) training, as well as access to instructional online modules. When expertise and skill level matches personal confidence, Treff or Mark Manzon (second-in-command) will "sign off" the new pilot. Each volunteer pilot is expected to make a (minimum) commitment of monthly rides from May until September.

In order for this community service to be a success, and in addition to new pilots, we also need the support of donors, web administrators, and grant and bursary writers. Sponsors from the community are gratefully acknowledged with their logos on our trailers.

Think about getting involved and come "Tri With Us". It's fun! For more information on Cycling Without Age Lanark County, visit <cwalc.org>, email <cwalanarkcty@gmail.com> or phone 257-2892.



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# Making Energy While the Sun Shines

## Mississippi Mills Considers a Utility-Scale Battery Storage Plant

These are exciting times in Mississippi Mills and Lanark County! On January 30, the township will hold a public meeting to hear comments on a proposal to build a utility-scale electricity battery storage system on Hwy 29.

"Huh?" I hear you say. "What's that?"

It's part of the transition to a green energy world.

Simply put, renewables like solar energy are fabulous. But it's true that they work best while the sun shines. In fact, they work so well when the sun shines that they produce lots of power. (Spain produced half of its power from solar last year!)

by Susan Brandum and Rick Edwards

We're no laggards in Lanark County. In fact, Lanark and Leeds and Grenville counties are the "Solar Capital of Ontario." That's according to a previous President of the Canadian Solar Industries Association who looked at a solar map of Ontario. Some years ago, when I last checked, we had 17 solar farms in the two counties. We're pumping out a lot of power.

We need to capture and store that energy for when we need it. According to the proponent of the project, Compass Renewable Energy Consulting, the proposed Utility Stationary Battery Energy Storage "will help support the existing electrical grid and will help with electrical peak management and conservation efforts. It also will help support the transition to green energy."

These batteries are like the ones that power your laptops, and your cellphones. But they're huge, and they herald a new era.

Historically, we have depended on enormous central power plants sending their power out across the province over huge power lines. As so many of us learned in the Great Ice Storm of '98, most of us in Eastern Ontario get most of our power from the Pickering nuclear station — that's a long way away. Almonte residents were (and are) lucky to have their own local power supply with Ottawa River Power Corp.

But things are shifting in this new era. We're planning for, developing and adding what is called "Distributed Power"; in other words, power that is generated in smaller amounts in decentralized locations. We know from nature that distributed systems are more resilient to weather disruptions. By having power generated at smaller, decentralized plants (as well as large central plants), the inherent resilience should help keep us from repeating the huge blackout of 2003. (The cause of that blackout was a small, local incident — the failure of an alarm system after trees fell on some wires that just happened to be down the street from my sister's house in Ohio.

But that small incident tripped an outage that cascaded across the whole of Ontario and the eastern seaboard of the U.S.)

Distributed power can be produced by such things as solar farms, solar systems on your rooftops, local businesses that may be producing electricity and waste heat, local waterpower generating stations and farm biogas operations.

The challenge then becomes how do we capture, store and make use of that power at the times when we want to use it.

The answer is storage, which can take several forms. Depending on local assets, it can mean pumping water uphill into a storage reservoir like a municipal water tower, then releasing it when the power is needed. Or it can mean storing power in hundreds of thousands of Electric Vehicle batteries or Tesla Wall Battery units located in homes which can feed power back into the grid when needed through their home charging connections. Or it can mean batteries of the type being considered in Mississippi Mills.

A typical utility scale battery storage system is a bank of interconnected lithium-ion batteries that store electricity for immediate use in the event of increased demand that exceeds grid generating capacity or a sudden disruption to routine power generation.

There are several advantages to battery energy storage systems:

- They serve as a reservoir of power for hours or days when sunshine, wind or rivers are not at optimum or available.
- They can store significant amounts of off-peak/ lower cost electricity produced by conventional power plants for use during high demand periods. (Because 60% of Ontario's power comes from nuclear power plants that must run continuously, Ontario produces an excess of low-cost electricity overnight that can be stored and used later.)
- Efficiency of generating stations is improved by less reliance upon fossil fuel "peak plants" that come

online only during periods of high demand. (With Ontario's plan to build more natural gas peaking plants, it's critical that we use storage instead to avoid GHG emissions from the gas plants.)

- Electrical generators operate more efficiently at average demand than at peak demand.
- A storage system allows utilities to function with current facilities without building massively expensive new plants and sub-stations.
- Effective storage of cheaper electricity and less reliance upon peak plants has the potential to reduce overall utility cost for consumers.

There are a few proposals to build such utility-scale batteries in Eastern Ontario. One recently proposed for Elizabethtown-Kitley in Leeds and Grenville was stopped when residents expressed concern about fire risk and didn't get answers to their questions. Municipalities and proponents of the projects must ensure that the location of the battery is properly distant from habitations, that the project will use dedicated systems to maintain the batteries at the optimal operating temperature, and that the project will sponsor certified fire safety training for the personnel of the Mississippi Mills Fire Department.

This is a concrete opportunity to contribute to proactive management of the impacts of the climate crisis we are now living under. More than 80% of Canadians, including residents of Lanark County, say the climate crisis must be addressed.

Climate Network Lanark (CNL) will be exploring this issue in more depth at our Electricity Forum in the spring. Watch this column for more details.

Mississippi Mills has requested comments on the proposal on or before Friday, January 26. The public meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 30 at 6PM. You can attend via Zoom or in person at the Municipal Office. Contact Melissa Fudge, Planning Technician at 256-2064 x510 or <mfudge@mississippimills.ca>.

We encourage CNL supporters to read up on the project and attend the meeting to show support.



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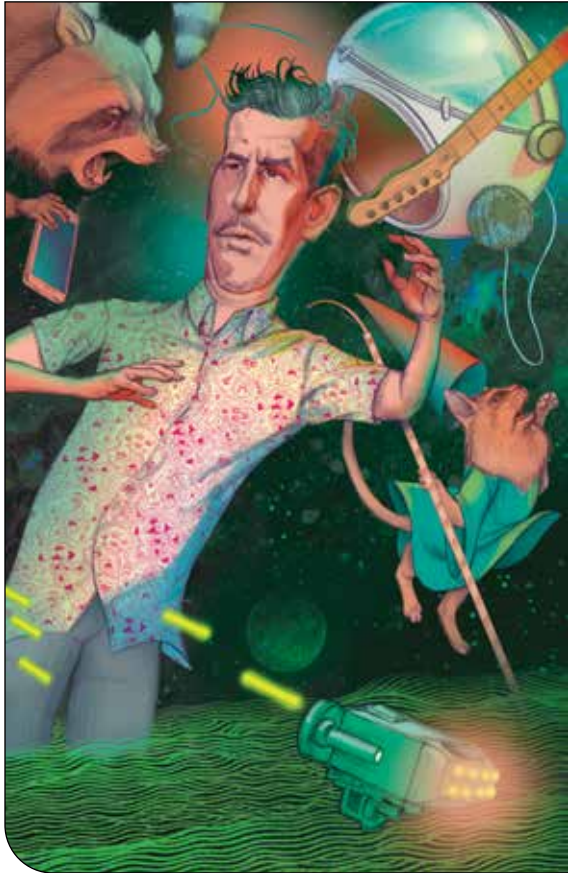
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# Unbridled Futurism!

## Sci-Fi Comedy Rock Show Lands in Smiths Falls

Captain Nick Di Gaetano takes the stage on January 21 at Bowie's in Smiths Falls with his Sci-Fi Comedy Rock Show "Unbridled Futurism" — and a dire warning for humanity!

Hailing from an advanced parallel Earth, Captain Nick is the first human being to travel at the speed of light from the only Earth that has ever managed to do so. He's kind of a big deal.



Don't miss Captain Nick Di Gaetano's captivating show at Bowie's on January 21 (image by CM Duffy)

After an accident while travelling at light speed, he's been condemned to phase uncontrollably between realities. Pursued by an inter-dimensional threat that is hellbent on eliminating humans from every reality and timeline, he's come to tell us of the greatest threat to our collective existence.

"I know you thought your world would end because of climate change or nuclear war, but I'm sorry to tell you that it's gonna be because of raccoons. With iPhones," explains Captain Nick.

"They're pretty clever. They have the intelligence of a human toddler, and we've all seen how quickly they can find Blippy videos on YouTube. It's diabolical. Needless to say, they're following me across space and time and now they're on their way here. I'm really, really sorry."

"But there's still hope for us," says the Captain. "Your Earth can save the cosmos from the Raccoon King. You can be heroes. All you have to do is come to the show and hear my plan." He adds: "if you ever thought your life had no meaning, it does now."

Unbridled Futurism is a theatrical concert with DIY video, absurd characters and a fleet of original tunes played by a live band featuring Lanark County-based musicians Joel Brown (aka Dirt Truck) on bass, Lisa Poushinsky (of Kempville Street Piano and Voyager Music School) on keys and Pat Maloney (of Pat Maloney and Bowie's Bar) on drums. It plays on Friday, January 19 at the Great Canadian Theatre Company in Ottawa, and on Sunday, January 21 at Bowie's in Smiths Falls, as part of their 3<sup>rd</sup> SNDY series. Tickets are \$20, and you can find them at <bowiessmithsfalls.com/3rd-sndy-songwriter-series>.

Unbridled Futurism has received 4 Ns (NNNN) from *Now Toronto* and has been called "strange and surreal", "a fun, weird mixture of TV's *Sliders*, David Bowie's *Space Odyssey*, and Mystery Science Theatre 3000", "kooky sci-fi" and "weird as f\*ck".



## Frost & Fire Winter Festival

### Returning to Perth on Family Day Weekend!

Perth Tourism is pleased to present the return of the Frost & Fire Winter Festival, taking place on Saturday, February 17 as part of Family Day Weekend.

Back for another year, this full-day family-friendly event will provide visitors with an array of activities geared towards all ages. Experiences will be taking place throughout Perth, both indoors and outdoors.

Enjoy public skating at the arena, take part in outdoor laser tag, or team up with friends or family for a bowling game. Encounter entertainers, partake in a horse and carriage ride through the beautiful downtown, and enjoy special promotions offered by Perth businesses. Browse treats and handmade wares by skilled artisans at the Vendor Marketplace inside Code's Mill. Wander throughout Perth and take part in the scavenger hunt for a chance to win some fun prizes, then drop by the indoor and outdoor warming stations. Finish your day with a hot beverage and dine in at one of Perth's great restaurants.

Experience a fun-filled weekend in Perth! For more information and to stay up to date on details, visit <perth.ca/frostandfire>.



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# But I Only Wanted Five!

My dear wife has been limited in her mobility since a hip replacement in early December (and yes, she is recovering extremely well, thank you); however, it means that I have now assumed the role of hunter/gatherer. On a recent foray to our local food emporium, I was instructed to bring home cat food (as the chipmunks are now safely ensconced underground).

Imagine my confusion when I found the price on the shelf for seven tins was \$7.70. In very small print the price per tin was considerably more if fewer than seven were purchased. I am being penalized 17 percent if I don't buy seven! Seriously, why? Is there a sadist filming me as I walk to my car juggling seven tins (having forgotten to bring my embroidered carry-all into the store)?

by David Hinks

For many items two prices are listed: one for a single item, 10 to 20 percent cheaper per unit if you buy two. Perhaps I'm becoming a cantankerous curmudgeon, but I find that this irritates me. I don't want two packages of the same kind of cracker or cereal, and two containers of dairy products will spoil before I use the second. My Scottish ancestors really resent paying the higher price!

While I'm on a rant against modern food supply logistics, I question the need for asparagus twelve months of the year and wonder at the carbon footprint. However, to be perfectly honest I would be hard pressed to do without coffee or bananas with my morning breakfast.

I assume that pricing and logistics decisions are part of the profit maximizing strategy of retailers that they defend vociferously. Rather than supporting the billionaires that control an increasingly concentrated food supply system, I try to support local producers who plough their profits back into the local economy.

*The 100-Mile Diet: A Year of Local Eating* is a non-fiction book written by Canadian writers Alisa Smith and J. B. MacKinnon. Beginning in March 2005 the urban couple began purchasing only foods with ingredients they knew were all from within 100 miles. Finding little in grocery stores, they relied on farmers' markets and visits to local farms. The couple first wrote about the experience in articles for the online magazine *The Tyee*. The popularity of the articles led to a book. The book coincided with the emerging popularity of the locavore movement and farmers' markets and grabbed a lot of media attention. Local and international media examined the feasibility of only eating food produced locally, local food-themed events, and locavore groups. The book sparked a global phenomenon. The 100-Mile Diet helped grow the local food movement that was emerging back then — "locavore" was named word of the year by the Oxford American Dictionary in 2007.

Fifteen years later (in 2020) *The Tyee* published follow-up articles. MacKinnon notes that in 2007 there was already a lot of work being done to promote local food. "All of a sudden, in one year, there was our book, there was Michael Pollan's book *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, and there was Barbara Kingsolver's book *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*. All about local eating." I would liken it to a "tipping point". MacKinnon attributes much of their success to the developing internet. "When we first started writing about it (the 100-mile diet) online for *The Tyee*, it wasn't just that we started hearing from people in Vancouver or B.C. or Canada — in a matter of days we were hearing from people in India and Israel and Bali. We had 10,000 people a month reading our blog".



Photo by Shelley Pauls

MacKinnon adds that there is reason to be optimistic that there will be big changes in how our food is grown. "There was this surge of interest in local food, and it really showed me that if enough people got on board with an idea, then circumstances can change very quickly. In the case of the 100-Mile Diet, there were all these visible changes even within a year or two — grain farming where there hadn't been grain farms for decades, all of these new farmers' markets, hundreds more community garden plots. There's still a lot that can be done, but also no doubt that the local food system is stronger now than it was before".

And of course, there is no food more local than the food we grow in our backyard, on our balcony or in a neighbourhood garden. And, if you will allow me one more rant, I am disappointed by the parks in our new subdivisions. We generally have a flat rectangle of sod with a climbing structure in one corner. Where is the garden where neighbours get together and grow some vegetables? Where are the chairs and tables where folks can share a cup of coffee? Where is the intergenerational sharing of knowledge of growing things? Where are the natural spaces where kids can explore and learn about the environment? Why do the developers not leave a corner with a few trees and original vegetation?

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# The Art House Music Series

## A Fusion of Art and Music at the CP Gallery

The Carleton Place Gallery has quickly become a jewel in the crown of Bridge Street since opening its doors in August 2023. It is also about to become a destination for local music lovers through a new partnership with musicians Mel and Don Bray. The first day they stepped into the gallery they noted the wonderful acoustics paired with a visual feast for the eyes. They knew this could be the perfect place for a fusion of the arts!



The first Art House concert features Chris MacLean (left) and Don Bray at the CP Gallery on January 25

This pair of local singer/songwriters had been waiting for the right opportunity to come along — one that offers great acoustics for showcasing the musical talents of the region in a unique and intimate monthly listening experience. The concerts, dubbed “The Art House Music Series” will feature seasoned musicians, paired with local food and drink creations amidst a backdrop of a tastefully-curated, eclectic and ever-changing 2D and 3D art.

“Ginny toured us around the gallery and introduced us to some outstanding local art pieces, explain-

ing a bit about the artists and the processes they have honed to transform the mundane into explosions of colour and emotion,” explains Mel Bray. “We were mesmerized. After meeting Pam and Colleen and learning even more about this burgeoning community space, we were sold. These three gallerists/artists have transformed this space into an elegant community hub where anyone can learn, collaborate, create and share alongside the inspiring energy of the Mississippi River”.

Soon after this introduction, Mel and Don had signed up five enthusiastic acts and The Art House Music Series was born. Plans are underway to expand this unique initiative to include dynamic workshops at the gallery that will further engage the local entertainment community, setting the stage for even more outstanding opportunities in the months ahead. “We’re all very excited about this new collaboration. This will definitely bring something unique to the community,” notes Ginny Fobert, one of the three Carleton Place Gallery owners.

To streamline ticket sales for their events, the gallery has teamed up with Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434), which is locally owned and operated by theHumm. The first concert takes place from 7-9:30PM on January 25 and features Don Bray and Chris MacLean. The doors to the gallery’s workshop will open at 6:30 where people can mingle and purchase a “mocktail” made by The Granary. The music starts at 7 in the art gallery and the cost is \$30 per person (plus HST and fees) for an unforgettable evening of entertainment. The art gallery’s walls will be moved aside for the performance, allowing uninterrupted viewing of the concert.

The Art House Music Series is in the final stages of scheduling its monthly concerts until June of this year, and will soon be announcing other wonderful entertainment opportunities that are sure to pique the curiosity of local residents and businesses. Be sure to register for the newsletter at <cpgallery.ca> to keep up-to-date on what’s happening!

# PDCF Gives the Most Grants Ever!

The Perth and District Community Foundation (PDCF) saw a 50% increase in the number of funding applications received last fall for their Community Grants Program. This February, 22 organizations will receive a total of \$146,619. This is the most projects funded and the highest dollar amount of Community Grants ever given by PDCF.

For the first time, PDCF is funding local organizations that are not registered charities. The federal government changed granting rules last year and opened eligibility to a wider array of community groups. Less-established groups that are undertaking projects which reflect the Foundation’s purpose are now able apply for a PDCF Community Grant.

During a time when the pandemic and inflation have had major negative impacts on the most vulnerable populations, the change to eligibility requirements is welcomed by many small, non-profit, social change organizations.

Of the 22 organizations that are receiving PDCF Community Grants, five do not currently have charitable tax status:

- The Parkinson’s Community Network provides information and support to community members with Parkinson’s disease and their families. PCN has an organizational fund with the PDCF and can receive donations there.
- Climate Network Lanark is working to educate the public and encourage concrete actions to stop climate change.
- The Lanark and District Museum preserves and displays historical artifacts from the Lanark Highlands at their location in the Village of Lanark.

- The Listening Room Series brings community together through concerts by local musicians. Proceeds from each concert are donated to different local charities.
- The Hospice Hub provides information and support in Perth and District to people who wish for end-of-life hospice care, and help to those who care for them. The Hospice Hub has an organizational fund with PDCF and can receive donations there. Along with the other 17 charities that are receiving PDCF Community Grants, these small non-profits are contributing to the betterment of the community.

PDCF Community Grant applications open every September and close at the end of October. Funded projects must benefit communities located in Perth, Tay Valley, Lanark Highlands and Drummond North Elmsley Townships. Visit <pdcf.ca> for more information about Community Grants and more.



The Parkinson’s Community Network was just one of many groups to receive a PDCF grant

**Friends of Mississippi Mills Public Library**  
INTRODUCE THEIR 2024 EVENTS

ART SHOW  
ANNUAL BOOK SALE  
TRIVIA NIGHT  
ONLINE AUCTION OF LOCAL SERVICES  
PLAY READING  
KIDS WRITING CONTEST  
and possibly  
1-2 SOLSTICE CONCERTS

Email the Friends:  
[Friends@missmillslibrary.com](mailto:Friends@missmillslibrary.com)

ALMONTE Readers & Writers WINTER PROGRAMMING

JANUARY 14 1:00-3:00 p.m. Almonte Library	Monthly write-ins	FEBRUARY 4 1:00-3:00 p.m. Almonte Library
JANUARY 24 5:30-7:30 p.m. Carriageway Studios By donation		FEBRUARY 21 5:30-7:30 p.m. Carriageway Studios By donation
JANUARY 31 4:00-5:00 p.m. OVC Free	Book swap	FEBRUARY 28 4:00-5:00 p.m. OVC Free
PLAYING with FORM with Jessie Carson FEBRUARY 1, 8, 15, & 22 5:30-7:30 p.m. Almonte Library Course fee \$120	Creative writing circles	Intro to PERSONAL STORYTELLING with Emily Pearlman MARCH 7, 14, 21, & 28 1:00-3:00 p.m. Almonte Library Course fee \$120

[www.almontereadersandwriters.org](http://www.almontereadersandwriters.org)

The Smiths Falls Community Theatre Presents

**SEE HOW THEY RUN**  
A FARCE BY PHILIP KING

Directed by Jamie Schoular

“See How They Run” is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.  
[www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com) - February 2024

**February 16, 17 & 22, 23, 24 at 7:30 pm**  
**Sun Matinees**  
**February 18 & 25 at 2:00 pm**

• Adult \$24 • Student (with ID) \$10

Group rates available for 15 or more for same performance - call for details

Tickets available at:  
• Special Greetings, 8 Russell St. E., Smiths Falls (cash/debit/voucher)  
• [smithsfallstheatre.com](http://smithsfallstheatre.com) (Visa/Mastercard/Paypal)  
• By Phone - 613-283-2244 (Visa/Mastercard/voucher)  
• At the Door - 1/2 hour before performance (cash/debit/voucher)  
53 Victoria Avenue, Smiths Falls

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SLONIOWSKI

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artists and eccentrics,  
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with special guest

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Students \$15

Almonte Old Town Hall  
Doors @ 7:00

details & other shows @  
folkusalmonte.com



The art above is by Vanessa Uschy Coplan, who offers classes at her  
Twin Feathers Studio in Almonte

## Twin Feathers Studio Make 2024 Your Most Creative Year Yet!

By Vanessa Uschy Coplan

In 2020 my partner and I moved to Almonte from Ottawa. In 2023 Twin Feathers Studio was born; a creative space to make, play and completely embrace the creative process. This studio space has been built for creatives of all types who want to engage in artistic expression and skill building, and have fun making stuff!

As an art teacher and practicing artist, one of my favourite things in life is to support creative projects and people. I love to pass on artistic knowledge and practices that I have found useful in my own work and that of the many students I have taught over the last 20 years.

Whether I am facilitating students' work during Portfolio Preparations or working with creatives who love throwing mixed media materials around and seeing what sticks, my passion is artistic expression and encouraging others to trust the creative process.

My teaching philosophy is simple: build trusting working relationships with students, and the art will follow! This trust fosters the motivation required, and feeds the confidence and skill-building in the students to generate the work. I provide a safe and supportive teaching environment where students are encouraged to be themselves and express this in their artistic endeavours.

### Classes Offered

I offer a program called **Portfolio Prep** for acceptance to Canterbury Highschool's Visual Art Program. Together we work through the required elements of the portfolio. Once observational drawing skills are solidified we move on to the more creative section of the portfolio where students are encouraged to produce work that is only as limited as their imaginations!

I also offer Portfolio Prep for post-secondary programs in architecture, animation, fine art and design for grades 10-12 and gap-year students. Merging artistic skill and proof of concept in clear, clever and creative ways, thinking outside the box and devoting

time, energy and effort to each piece is key to producing the quality of work that competes with that of others for spots in particular programs. I work one-on-one with students to ensure their strongest artistic visions are articulated in a powerful and meaningful presentation.

In **Mixed Media Mania**, we play with different paint and drawing media, collage and fabric, and learn as we go. In addition to various media we will work on surfaces such as paper, canvas and wood. We will explore a variety of subject matter — both real and imagined! Let's see what kind of crazy fun we can get up to in the world of mixed media mania.

**Learning to Draw** is not scary! Using both traditional and more contemporary techniques, we will work on developing skills of objective drawing, composition and more!

In **Patchwork Party**, bring your fabric, sewing needles, thread and embroidery floss and let's create some patchworks together! Patchwork is a wonderful way to express yourself. We will work with different imagery, simple stitches and fabric paint. Your patches and can be framed as stand-alone pieces or sewn together to create larger works such as blankets or wall hangings.

Whether you are preparing a body of work for an art submission or trying to sort out your artistic practice, it is always helpful to have feedback on your process. In my **Creative Coaching** sessions we work together to ascertain your personal and professional goals. Then we work towards them whilst building up your artistic confidence, one creative step at a time.

Classes are offered in a variety of formats — at Twin Feathers Studio in Almonte, via Zoom, and even as house calls! Why not start 2024 off on a colourful and creative foot?

If you are interested in learning more about me and the classes I offer, please reach out by email at <ness@vanessauschy.ca>, visit <vanessauschy.ca>, or follow me on Instagram @twinfeathersstudio.

## Come Carve with Us!

By John Peters

After years of searching for a home for group carving during and after the Covid need for isolation, the local carving group The Mississippi Wood Carvers are once again able to use the Wellness Room at Orchard View on the Mississippi (OVM).

There we gather on Tuesday afternoons from 1-3PM to share ideas and learn from one-another. Residents of OVM are welcome to drop in and watch or join the group, learn a few carving skills and produce the occasional masterpiece. In addition to enjoying time together, over the

last couple of years the Mississippi Wood Carvers have produced over 100 comfort birds for Home Hospice North Lanark to share with their clients.

Other residents of Almonte, Carleton Place and the surrounding area who are looking for a new and inexpensive hobby are welcome to join us. We are not qualified instructors but have years of experience and are willing to share what we have learned.

Feel free to drop in to visit or come and learn the basics of wood carving. For more information, please contact John Peters at 601-2148 or <almontecarver@gmail.com>.

# Get Cozy with Literature

## Almonte Readers & Writers Winter Program

Calling all literature lovers and story creators! Almonte Readers & Writers (ARW) is excited to announce a roster of community events and educational opportunities for the months of January, February and March.

These new programs offer great opportunities for writers to get feedback on their work and grow their network. ARW's Creative Director Jessie Carson says: "writing, like reading, is often thought of as a solitary pursuit. But to become better writers or broaden our literary horizons as readers, having a community that challenges and encourages us to grow is invaluable."

Join them for twice-monthly **Write-in** group gatherings! Pre-registration is requested, and participation is by donation. These drop-ins are open to writers of all ages and take place on Sundays from

1-3PM at the Almonte Library, and on Wednesdays from 5:30-7:30PM at Carriageway Studios. The first write-ins are scheduled for January 14 and 24. Visit <almontereadersandwriters.org> for more details on dates for January, February, and March.

ARW is all about support for local writers and creating more opportunities to champion each other's work, receive generative feedback, and help their writing practice grow.

Sign-up today for their four-week Creative Writing courses. Registration is required, and the course fee is \$120. Coming up in February ARW presents **Playing with Form**, led by Jessie Carson, on Thursdays (February 1, 8, 15 and 22) from 5:30-7:30PM at the Almonte Library. Looking ahead to March, ARW presents **Intro to Personal Storytelling**, led by Emily Pearlman. Visit their website for more details.

And don't forget the power of reading!

Each month, ARW will host a community **book swap**. There's no charge to participate, just bring a book you love and are willing to trade. These take place the last Wednesday of every month from 4-5PM at Ottawa Valley Coffee Almonte.

### About ARW

ARW is a non-profit organization presenting literary events and programs to audiences in beautiful Mississippi Mills that celebrate the literary arts, build connections between readers and writers, bolster skill-building, and amplify a diverse array of local and visiting artistic voices. Learn more about ARW and find out how to get involved by visiting <almontereadersandwriters.org>.

Pictured at left, Emily Pearlman will present a course entitled *Intro to Personal Storytelling* as part of the ARW winter program



## ART CLASSES AVAILABLE

Small group and private classes · in person and/or on Zoom  
Portfolio Prep for Canterbury High School in Ottawa  
Portfolio Prep for Post-Secondary school applications  
Mixed Media Mania · Drawing is Fun not Scary  
Patchwork Party · Creative Coaching  
All ages and stages are welcome!

*Vanessa U.*  
ART COACH

Please get in touch for more information:  
ness@vanessauschy.ca @twinfeathersstudio www.vanessauschy.ca

## FACTORY

by Robert Tombs

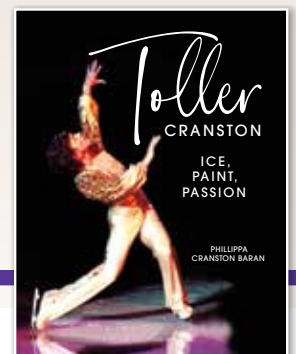
Saturday, February 3, 2pm - 4pm  
Mississippi Valley Textile Museum  
mvtm.ca



## EXCLUSIVE BOOK LAUNCH

TOLLER CRANSTON: ICE, PAINT, PASSION

This unique biography seamlessly blends interviews, memories, letters, photos, and original artwork to vividly showcase the achievements and impact of one of Canada's most captivating and influential figures. Full Colour, 290 pages.



Information: phillippabaran@gmail.com

Sunday, March 3, 2024 • 2:00 pm

At the historic O'Brien Theatre  
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www.phillippacranstonbaran.com

## January's Events

### All Month

**Fulton's Trails** [from Jan 13], bring skis, snowshoes, hiking boots for 8km of groomed trails. Purchase Site Fee at <fultons.ca>

### Community

**SF Bridge Club**, Tues, 12:45pm. 283-2690. Smiths Falls Legion. 256-4747

**Duplicate Bridge**, 12:45pm. every Wednesday Almonte Legion. 256-4747

**Perth Duplicate Bridge**, Every Thursday at 1PM. 300-9502. St. Paul's United, Perth.

**Carleton Place Toastmasters Club**, Jan 25, 7PM. All welcome. via Zoom, contact carletonplace.toastmastersclubs.org for link

**Hub Hospice Death Café**, Jan 16, 2-4PM; 6-8PM. Come for a conversation about death and dying. Community Presbyterian Church, Almonte. Free. Info at hhn.ca

**MERA Speaker Series: Finding Treasures Among Possessions**, Jan 18, 7-8:30PM. Finding Treasures Among Your Possessions, with Michael Rikley-Lancaster. Via Zoom, register at meraschoolhouse@gmail.com. Info at meraschoolhouse.org

**MERA Speaker Series: Travel with a Clear Conscience**, Jan 25, 7-8:30PM. Tips and Tricks for Ethical Tourists, with Ross Elliott and Liz Maltby. Via Zoom, register at meraschoolhouse@gmail.com. Info at meraschoolhouse.org

**Public Talk on Meditation**, Jan 27, 10:30AM-noon. With Buddhist teacher and monk Gen Kelsang Thekchen. Perth & District Union Library. \$15. Info at MeditateinOttawa.org

### Literature

**An Evening with Maureen Jennings**, Jan 15, 6:30-8PM. Maureen Jennings will speak about being an award-winning author. Via Zoom, email cfuwperthanddistrict@gmail.com to register. Info at cfuwperthanddistrict.wordpress.com

**Write-In**, Jan 24, 5:30-7:30PM. Open to writers of all ages. Pre-registration requested, participation by donation. Carriageway Studios, Almonte. Register at almontereadersandwriters.org

**Book Swap**, Jan 31, 4-5PM. Bring a book, get a book! Ottawa Valley Coffee Almonte. Info at almontereadersandwriters.org

### Theatre

**Barbie**, Jan 19 and 20, 7PM. Film, rated PG. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. \$12. smithsfallstheatre.com

**Rose**, Jan 25, 2PM and 7PM. A Danish film about two sisters and how their relationship is challenged on a trip to Paris. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. \$12 at the door. sffilmnight@gmail.com

### VisualArts

**Mississippi Wood Carvers**, every Tuesday, 1-3PM. Drop in to share ideas and learn from one-another. OrchardView by the Mississippi, Almonte. Info at 601-2148

### Music

**Ukulele Club**, every Tuesday, 7PM. Hosted by George Turcotte. Come jam, learn and have fun on the uke. For adults and teens. Tatlock Community Hall, Almonte.

**Don Bray & Chris MacLean**, Jan 25, 7PM. Part of the Art House Music Series. Carleton Place Gallery. \$30 plus fees from TicketsPlease.ca. Info at cpgallery.ca

**An Evening in Honour of Robbie Burns**, Jan 26, 7:30PM. Scottish music and poetry performed by Tripoly and the Grenville Troubadours. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. \$25. smithsfallstheatre.com

**Tom Wilson**, Jan 27, 8PM. A member of Blackie and the Rodeo Kings and Lee Harvey Osmond, this performance will incorporate passages from Beautiful Scars, his powerful memoir of self-discovery. Almonte Old Town Hall. \$35/\$15 students. Info at folkusalmonte.com

**SRO Tea Dance**, Jan 28, 1:30-4PM. Dance to big band Standing Room Only. Entry (\$16) & snacks: cash only. Almonte Old Town Hall. \$16 ea/\$30 couple. Info at facebook.com/srobjgband

### Pub Listings

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

Jan 19, 20 Jack De Keyzer Band, 7PM, \$100

Jan 26 No Principals

Jan 27 Robbie Burns Day, 6-10PM, \$70 dinner+show

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

Jan 20 Karaoke, 9PM

Jan 21 Unbridled Futurism, 8PM, \$20

Jan 26 The Constellations, \$10 artist tip recommended

Jan 27 Drag Bingo, 9PM, \$10

**Lumbertown Ale House** (Arnprior, 623-8885): 6-9PM, no cover

Jan 20 Break Even

Jan 27 Jayla Kirkey

**St. James Gate** (Carleton Place, 257-7530): 7-10PM

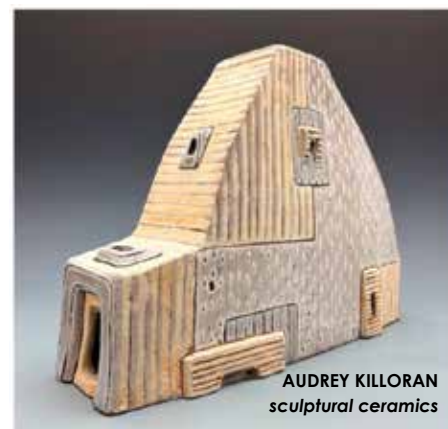
Jan 19 Kevin & Rick

Jan 26 Tom Watson

Pick up *theHumm* in Merrickville at  
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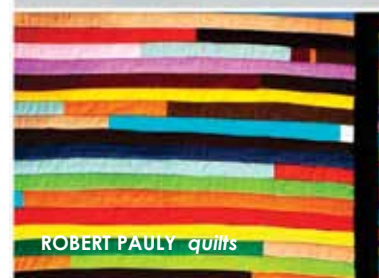
AUDREY KILLORAN  
sculptural ceramics



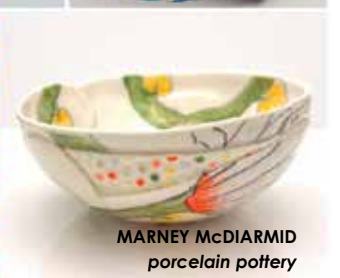
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SRO Tea Dance, Almonte, Mar 3  
 Toller Cranston Biography Book Launch, Arnprior, Mar 3  
 Almonte in Concert, Mar 9  
 Lanark County Seedy Saturday, Almonte, Mar 16  
 Justin Rutledge, Burnstown, Mar 22  
 The Once, Almonte, Mar 23  
 Eight Mountains, Pakenham, Mar 24  
 Lloyd Spiegel, Burnstown, Mar 30  
 Black Coffee, Perth, Apr 4-14  
 Ariel Posen Band, Burnstown, Apr 5-6  
 Maple Run Tour, Apr 6-7  
 Almonte in Concert, Apr 13  
 Frankenstein, Smiths Falls, Apr 19-28  
 The Moth Project, Almonte, Apr 27  
 The Great Escaper, Pakenham, Apr 28  
 SRO Tea Dance, Almonte, Apr 28  
 Diary of Anne Frank, Perth, May 16-26  
 Daniel Champagne, Burnstown, May 24  
 Limblifter, Burnstown, May 26  
 Maggie's Getting Married, Smiths Falls, Jun 14-23  
 The Perils of Persephone, Perth, Jun 20-30  
 The Enchanted Bookshop, Smiths Falls, Aug 16-25  
 Laugh Out Loud, Perth, Oct 17-20  
 Arsenic and Old Lace, Smiths Falls, Oct 18-27  
 It's a Wonderful Life, Smiths Falls, Dec 6-15  
 Winter Wonderettes, Perth, Nov 28-Dec 8

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
29 🎵 The Young Novelists, Perth	30 🎵 Ukulele Club, Almonte 📖 Mississippi Wood Carvers, Almonte	31 📖 Book Swap, Almonte 🎵 Where is my Mind Trivia, Bowie's 🎵 Wings 'n Tunes with Shawn McCullough, The Cove	1 🎵 Carleton Place Toastmasters Club 🎵 Quit Your Day Job Open Stage, Bowie's 🎵 MERA Speaker Series: What are These Things Called Podcasts? 🎵 Swing Dance, Almonte
5	6 🎵 Ukulele Club, Almonte 📖 Mississippi Wood Carvers, Almonte	7 🎵 Where is my Mind Trivia, Bowie's 🎵 Wings 'n Tunes with Shawn McCullough, The Cove	8 🎵 Carleton Place Toastmasters Club 🎵 Quit Your Day Job Open Stage, Bowie's 🎵 MERA Speaker Series: Exploring Cohousing 🎵 Sleuth, Perth
12	13 🎵 Ukulele Club, Almonte 📖 Mississippi Wood Carvers, Almonte 🎵 Hub Hospice Death Café, Almonte	14 🎵 Where is my Mind Trivia, Bowie's 🎵 Wings 'n Tunes with Shawn McCullough, The Cove	15 🎵 Carleton Place Toastmasters Club 🎵 Quit Your Day Job Open Stage, Bowie's 🎵 Sleuth, Perth 🎵 MERA Speaker Series: In Search of Pristine Skies
19 📖 Almonte Quilters Guild Meeting 🎵 Family Day Activities in Mississippi Mills, Almonte	20 🎵 Ukulele Club, Almonte 📖 Mississippi Wood Carvers, Almonte	21 🎵 Greening Your Home, Carleton Place 📖 Write-In, Almonte 🎵 Where is my Mind Trivia, Bowie's 🎵 Wings 'n Tunes with Shawn McCullough, The Cove	22 📖 The Grand Author Takeover - Grand Introduction, Carleton Place 🎵 See How They Run, Smiths Falls 🎵 Swing Dance, Almonte 🎵 Carleton Place Toastmasters Club 🎵 Quit Your Day Job Open Stage, Bowie's
26 🎵 Lynn Hanson with Blair Michael Hogan, Perth	27 🎵 Ukulele Club, Almonte 📖 Mississippi Wood Carvers, Almonte	28 🎵 Where is my Mind Trivia, Bowie's 🎵 Wings 'n Tunes with Shawn McCullough, The Cove 📖 Book Swap, Almonte 🎵 Making Peace with Death, Almonte	29 🎵 Quit Your Day Job Open Stage, Bowie's 🎵 C.A. & Sonny, Carleton Place 🎵 Jesus Christ Superstar, Perth

## Festivals

**Frost & Fire Winter Festival**, Feb 17. Indoor & outdoor winter activities & entertainment in Downtown Perth. Info at perth.ca/frostandfire.

## Literature

**Write-In**, Feb 4, 1-3PM. Open to writers of all ages. Pre-registration requested, participation by donation. Almonte Public Library. By donation. almontereadersandwriters.org

**Write-In**, Feb 21 5:30-7:30PM. Open to writers of all ages. Pre-registration requested, participation by donation. Carriageway Studios, Almonte. By donation. Register at almontereadersandwriters.org

**Book Swap**, Jan 31 & Feb 28, 4-5PM. Bring a book, get a book! Ottawa Valley Coffee Almonte. Info at almontereadersandwriters.org

**Rockin' Readers Book Sale**, Feb 3, 12-8PM. A used book sale to raise funds for School-BOX and their initiatives in indigenous communities. There will be treats, crafts, celebrity readers, and so much more! Almonte United Church. almonteunited.com

**The Grand Author Takeover - Grand Introduction**, Feb 22, 6:30PM. An evening of dialogue, readings (and confessions?) with ten authors. Carleton Place Gallery. By donation at TicketsPlease.ca

**The Grand Author Takeover - Meet & Greet**, Feb 23, 6-8:30PM. Wine and appetizer, author meet & greet. The Grand Hotel, Carleton Place. \$70 from TicketsPlease.ca. Info at hypogirlsquadaauthors.com

**The Grand Author Takeover - Book Fair**, Feb 24, 11AM-5PM. Book fair and author signing. The Grand Hotel, Carleton Place. \$10 from TicketsPlease.ca. Info at hypogirlsquadaauthors.com

## Visual Arts

**Mississippi Wood Carvers**, Tuesdays, 1-3PM. Drop in to share ideas and learn from one-another. Orchard View by the Mississippi, Almonte. Info at 601-2148

**MVTM exhibit opening: Factory**, Feb 3, 2-4PM. Works by painter Robert Tombs. Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Almonte. Info at mvtm.ca

**Meet the Artists**, Feb 10, 2-4PM. Meet artists Marina Raika, Gayle Kells and Jane Irwin. Exhibits run Feb 9 to March 15. Sivarulrasa Gallery, Almonte. Info at sivarulrasa.com

**Almonte Quilters Guild Meeting**, Feb 19, 7PM. With Susan Madu, Canadian quilt pattern designer and teacher. Via Zoom. contact almontequiltersguild.ca for link. Guests \$5

## Theatre

**Sleuth**, Feb 8, 9, 15, 16 at 7:30PM; Feb 10, 11, 17, 18 at 2PM. The ultimate game of cat and mouse. Studio Theatre Perth. Adults \$24; Youth \$12 from TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434. Info at studiotheatreperth.com

**See How They Run**, Feb 16, 17, 22-24 at 7:30PM; Feb 18 & 25 at 2PM. Comedy by Smiths Falls Community Theatre. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. Adults \$24; Students \$10 (with ID). smithsfallstheatre.com

**Jesus Christ Superstar**, Feb 23, 24, 29, Mar 1, 2 at 7:30PM; Feb 25 & Mar 3 at 4PM. Cancer fundraiser production by Orion Theatre. \$35 plus fees (\$20 for under 12) from TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434. St. Paul's United, Perth

**Oliver Jr**, Feb 23, 24, Mar 1 at 7:30PM; Feb 24, 25, Mar 2 at 2PM. The streets of Victorian England come to life in this production by the Mudds Youth. Carleton Place Town Hall. \$15 from TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434. Info at mississippimudds.ca

**Jules**, Feb 25, 2PM. Milton (Ben Kingsley) lives a quiet life in a small town, but finds his day upended when a UFO lands in his backyard. St. Andrew's United Church, Pakenham. \$15 from TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434

## Youth

**Beckwith Youth Dance**, Feb 9, 6-8PM. Valentines Day Theme. Canteen will be open. \$5 entry. Brunton Community Hall, Carleton Place. cmcgregor@twp.beckwith.on.ca

## Music

**Ukulele Club**, Tuesdays, 7PM. Hosted by George Turcotte. Come jam, learn and have fun on the uke. For adults and teens. Tatlock Community Hall, Almonte

**The Young Novelists**, Jan 29, 7PM. Classic him-and-her vocals, acoustic guitar, and percussion, delving into themes of love, loss, and nostalgia. Oakfield Rugby Park, Perth. \$30. Info at 267-7902

**Swing Dance**, Feb 1 & 21, 7-9PM. Pop-up swing dance in Almonte, intro dance lesson @7PM. Hillside Reformed Presbyterian Church, Almonte. \$5 cash

**Shake, Rattle & Roll Sock Hop**, Feb 3, 5PM. Live music by Eddy & The Stingrays. Nick Smith Centre, Arnprior. \$100. arnprior-regionalhealth.ca

**Old Tyme Country Dinner Dance**, Feb 4, 2-6PM. Country music, dancing, 5PM buffet. Musicians welcome. Clayton Community Centre. Adults \$18 / Children 6-10 \$8. Info at 256-0740

**Nathan Sloniowski and Friends**, Feb 24, 8PM. Performing music from *the lost LOve letter to a small town*. With special guest Kentucky. Almonte Old Town Hall. \$35/\$15 students from TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434. Info at folkusalmonte.com

**Pianoman**, Feb 24, 8PM. A world class Billy Joel tribute. Presented by Dream Rock Promotions. 19+. Cash bar. Farrell Hall, Perth. \$34 until Jan. 24/\$39 in advance/\$44 at the door. TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434

**Lynn Hanson with Blair Michael Hogan**, Feb 26, 7PM. A wonderfully charming and disarming performer. Oakfield Rugby Park, Perth. \$30. Info at 267-7902

**C.A. & Sonny**, Feb 29, 7PM. Part of the Art House Music Series. Carleton Place Gallery. \$30 from TicketsPlease.ca, 485-6434. Info at cpgallery.ca

# FEBRUARY 2024

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amanda Keeley Trio, The Cove</li> <li>The Kingmakers, Bowie's</li> </ul>	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rockin' Readers Book Sale, Almonte</li> <li>MVTM exhibit opening: Factory, Almonte</li> <li>Shake, Rattle &amp; Roll Sock Hop, Arnprior</li> <li>Birds of a Feather, The Cove</li> <li>Ken Workman, Arnprior</li> <li>Karaoke, Bowie's</li> </ul>	<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eric Uren &amp; Meghan Balogh, The Cove</li> <li>Write-In, Almonte</li> <li>Old Tyme Country Dinner Dance, Clayton</li> </ul>
<p>9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sleuth, Perth</li> <li>Beckwith Youth Dance, Carleton Place</li> <li>HEYDAY, The Cove</li> <li>Cait St. Clair, St. James Gate</li> <li>The Boo Radley Project, Bowie's</li> </ul>	<p>10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sleuth, Perth</li> <li>Meet the Artists, Almonte</li> <li>Valentines with Head Over Heels, The Cove</li> <li>Cargo Cult Acoustic Duo, Arnprior</li> <li>PIZAZZ - Pizza and Jazz, Bowie's</li> </ul>	<p>11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lunar New Year Celebration, Perth</li> <li>Sleuth, Perth</li> <li>Eric Uren &amp; Meghan Balogh, The Cove</li> </ul>
<p>16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sleuth, Perth</li> <li>See How They Run, Smiths Falls</li> <li>Hub Hospice Death Café, Almonte</li> <li>River City Junction, The Cove</li> <li>Rick &amp; Lindsay, St. James Gate</li> <li>Jeremy Tyall, Bowie's</li> </ul>	<p>17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sleuth, Perth</li> <li>See How They Run, Smiths Falls</li> <li>Back Forty Winterland, Mississippi Station</li> <li>Frost &amp; Fire Winter Festival, Perth</li> <li>Mysteries of the Keyhole House - Unlocked, Carleton Place</li> <li>Bahoo &amp; the Brat, Arnprior</li> <li>Karaoke, Bowie's</li> </ul>	<p>18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sleuth, Perth</li> <li>See How They Run, Smiths Falls</li> <li>Eric Uren &amp; Meghan Balogh, The Cove</li> <li>Keith Glass Band, Bowie's</li> </ul>
<p>23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Grand Author Takeover - Meet &amp; Greet, Carleton Place</li> <li>Jesus Christ Superstar, Perth</li> <li>Oliver Jr, Carleton Place</li> <li>See How They Run, Smiths Falls</li> <li>Tom Watson, St. James Gate</li> <li>Brock Mattson, Bowie's</li> </ul>	<p>24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Grand Author Takeover - Book Fair, Carleton Place</li> <li>Jesus Christ Superstar, Perth</li> <li>Oliver Jr, Carleton Place</li> <li>See How They Run, Smiths Falls</li> <li>Steve Stacey Duo, Arnprior</li> <li>The Album Covers, The Cove</li> <li>Nathan Sloniowski and Friends, Almonte</li> <li>Pianoman, Perth</li> <li>Café Parodique, Bowie's</li> </ul>	<p>25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jesus Christ Superstar, Perth</li> <li>Oliver Jr, Carleton Place</li> <li>See How They Run, Smiths Falls</li> <li>Jules, Pakenham</li> <li>Eric Uren &amp; Meghan Balogh, The Cove</li> <li>Write-In, Almonte</li> </ul>
<p><b>All Month</b></p> <p><b>Fulton's Trails:</b> bring skis, snowshoes, hiking boots for 8km of groomed trails. Purchase Site Fee at &lt;fultons.ca&gt;</p> <p><b>Fulton's Maple Season</b> [from Feb 17], Maple Shoppe open daily; weekends feature horse-drawn sleighrides, maple taffy on snow, campfires &lt;fultons.ca&gt;</p> <p><b>General Fine Craft</b> presents new works by Audrey Killoran (sculptural ceramics), Jennifer Noxon (paintings and prints) and Robert Pauly (quilts) &lt;generalfinecraft.com&gt;</p> <p><b>Mississippi Valley Textile Museum</b> presents <i>Factory</i>, works by Robert Tombs [from Feb. 3] &lt;mvtm.ca&gt;</p> <p><b>Sivarulrasa Gallery</b> presents <i>Marina Raika: Rising Sky; Gayle Kells: Embedded; and Jane Irwin: Talking With Vincent</i> [from Feb 9] &lt;sivarulrasa.com&gt;</p>		

## Pub Listings

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

Feb 2 Amanda Keeley Trio, 5PM

Feb 3 Birds of a Feather, 5PM

Feb 9 HEYDAY, 7PM, \$80 dinner+show

Feb 10 Valentines with Head Over Heels, 5PM

Feb 16 River City Junction, 7PM, \$100

Feb 24 The Album Covers, 7PM, \$70 dinner+show

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

Feb 2 The Kingmakers

Feb 3 Karaoke, 9PM

Feb 9 The Boo Radley Project

Feb 10 PIZAZZ - Pizza and Jazz, 8PM, \$30

Feb 16 Jeremy Tyall

Feb 17 Karaoke, 9PM

Feb 18 Keith Glass Band, 8PM, \$20

Feb 23 Brock Mattson

Feb 24 Café Parodique, 9PM, \$20

**St. James Gate** (Carleton Place, 257-7530): 7-10PM

Feb 9 Cait St. Clair

Feb 16 Rick & Lindsay

Feb 23 Tom Watson

**Lumbertown Ale House** (Arnprior, 623-8885): 6-9PM, no cover

Feb 3 Ken Workman

Feb 10 Cargo Cult Acoustic Duo

Feb 17 Bahoo & the Brat

Feb 24 Steve Stacey Duo

## Community

**Carleton Place Toastmasters Club**, Feb 8 & 22, 7PM. All welcome. Via Zoom, contact carletonplace.toastmastersclubs.org for link

**MERA Speaker Series: What are These Things Called Podcasts?**, Feb 1, 7-8:30PM. With Carrie Buchanan, professor of journalism and mass communication. Via Zoom, register at meraschoolhouse@gmail.com. Info at meraschoolhouse.org

**MERA Speaker Series: Exploring Cohousing**, Feb 8, 7-8:30PM. With Linda Kruus from Ottawa Cohousing. Via Zoom, register at meraschoolhouse@gmail.com. Info at meraschoolhouse.org

**Lunar New Year Celebration**, Feb 11, 11-3:30PM. Welcome the Year of the Dragon with lots of kids' activities and delicious food. Perth Legion. \$5 from TicketsPlease.ca.

**Hub Hospice Death Café**, Feb 13, 2-4PM and 6-8PM. Come for a conversation about death and dying. Community Presbyterian Church, Almonte. free. hhn.ca

**MERA Speaker Series: In Search of Pristine Skies**, Feb 15, 7-8:30PM. With Sanjeev Sivarulrasa. Via Zoom, register at meraschoolhouse@gmail.com. Info at meraschoolhouse.org

**Back Forty Winterland**, Feb 17, 11AM-5PM. Local food, drink, and outdoor fun. Back Forty Artisan Cheese, Mississippi Station. Info at artisancheese.ca

**Mysteries of the Keyhole House - Unlocked**, Feb 17, 2-4PM. An afternoon of mystery, history and fun with master illusionists Ted & Marion Outerbridge. Carleton Place and Beckwith Heritage Museum. \$15 (\$10 members). Info at cpbheritagemuseum.com

**Family Day Activities in Mississippi Mills**, Feb 19. Mount Pakenham (9AM-5PM); Fulton's Maple taffy, sleigh rides, trails (10AM-3PM); Museums (Appleton by donation, MVTM free, 10AM-4PM); Free Family Movie at the Old Town Hall (11AM); Free Skating: Almonte Arena (1-3PM), Pakenham (2-4PM); Mill of Kintail free for hiking, snowshoeing, x-country, BYO equipment. Town of Mississippi Mills. Info at mississippimills.ca

**Greening Your Home**, Feb 21, 7-8:30PM. Learn about heat pumps, home energy audits and retrofits, and how to get rebates from experts. Free, register at Eventbrite. Carleton Place Arena. Info at 294-8255

**Making Peace with Death**, Feb 28, 7-9PM. A transformative discussion with grief counsellor Barbara Carroll. Almonte Public Library. By donation. Info at learningagain-almonte.ca

To ensure that your event makes it onto our March calendar, please email the information to [calendar@thehummm.com](mailto:calendar@thehummm.com) by February 20<sup>th</sup>. We are also accepting listings for the Claiming Column right through to the end of 2024.

# Animal Communication – They Talk Too!

By Julie Oliveira

Have you ever wondered what your pet is thinking and feeling? You catch them staring intently at you and you think, “If only you could talk...” Well, they can and do, in their own way, and animal communication is a powerful tool to truly hear what they have to say.

It all started with a pig on a tiny island in the Azores. I was three years old and engaging in a spirited conversation with this pig on my grandparents’ farm. A few years later, I remember distinctly receiving comforting words from our Siamese cat after I had injured myself while playing outside. It wasn’t until years later, as an adult, that I actually had an animal communication session for one of my own cats. I didn’t even know what animal communication was, but I was stunned and impressed by the accuracy of the communicator I consulted with over the phone. She didn’t even see my cat in person! I vowed to someday reconnect with that skill so that I could help my own animal companions thrive both physically and emotionally.

I took a course in animal communication and immediately started doing my case studies. I completed them in no time and then did the advanced training. I had gone into it to use on my own at home, but came out of it wanting to do it for as many people and animals as possible. I love animals and nature and feel no greater joy than when I am connected to an animal and providing a channel for them to express themselves and be heard.

I have learned over a decade of communicating with dogs, cats, horses, birds, turtles, rabbits, chickens and even fish (to name a few) that they have a sense of humour, depth, and incredible wisdom to share from their

perspective. I never fail to be rewarded and uplifted by my sessions with these pure and loving beings. Some are chatty, some are deep, some are hilarious and some are very serious. They all have one thing in common – they love their two-legged companions and want to help them with their health, emotions and life in general. Have you ever noticed that your pet suddenly has the same limp or shoulder issue as you? Or that they seem anxious or depressed when you feel that way? They are incredible mirrors for us. My own cats are clear indicators for me of when I’m not present, am stressed, am not stopping to smell the roses, and so many other states of being that I’m sometimes too busy or distracted to be aware of.

I help people understand their pets better in order for them to form richer bonds and healthier lives together. Animal communication readings can also help people grieving their beloved pets who have crossed the rainbow bridge to find comfort in that physical loss. My work with animals has also evolved to include animal Reiki for its incredible healing benefits, as well as small animal massage therapy for rehabilitation and healing. Animal communication and animal Reiki sessions can be done



Julie Oliveira’s services include animal communication, Reiki, and small animal massage

remotely over video or phone call, using a photo or in-person. Small animal massage therapy sessions are only done in person. I am so grateful to be doing what I love every day and wouldn’t have it any other way!

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## It Has to Be You, Almonte! Valley Players Seek Input on Upcoming Shows

By Sarah Hegger

Established in 1983, and subsequently on hiatus since 2014, the Valley Players Almonte relaunched in December 2023 with a production of *It Had to Be You*. The new board was enthusiastically welcomed by the outgoing board in the President’s Report (November 2022) by former president Fraser Scantlebury, who wrote: “It is with great pleasure that I am able to report that the Valley Players of Almonte is returning to an active role in our community, through the dedicated efforts of a group of enthusiastic community and theatrical volunteers!”

With a rich and deep artistic heritage, the return of theatre to the Almonte community appeared to be a natural fit. As a group of volunteers we were, and still are, keen to engage the Almonte community around theatre and re-establish the Valley Players within Almonte.

We would like to acknowledge both the Municipality of Mississippi Mills who provided a grant to assist with production costs, and the ongoing support of this publication (theHumm). We thank Tim Horton’s Almonte, Milanos Pizza Almonte, and Jonsson’s Independent Grocer for their donations in kind. We would

also like to thank the local volunteers who came out to assist: Irina Shevchenko, Wendy Lee, Jenn Kelly and Brian McManus.

The reality is that a community theatre needs to be sustained by the community within which it operates, and that has to be you — the community of “the little Hollywood North”.

We are reaching out to Almonte around the future of the Valley Players. We are looking for proposals to stage an all-Almonte production. Our initial plan was to stage two to three high-quality productions a year. If you have an idea, and an interest in seeing theatre remain in Almonte, we’d love to hear from you. Please reach out via <valleyplayers.ca> or via email to <valleyplayersalmonte@gmail.com> and let us know the direction you would like to take.

Feedback from the small but enthusiastic audience who attended *It Had to Be You* indicates that the show was well received. We continue to believe there is a future for community theatre in Almonte, and place that future in your hands. The next Valley Players production should be developed, resourced and staged by the Almonte community with the support of the board. Over to you, Almonte!

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## Factory

### Exhibit by Robert Tombs at the MVTM

Join the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum (MVTM) on Saturday, February 3 from 2–4PM for the opening of *Factory* by Robert Tombs. The exhibit will be on display until April 13.

Robert Tombs is a conceptual painter who considers paint's physicality and behaviour itself to be the narrative, rather than strictly a medium to illustrate other things. This core belief has informed *Factory* — a series of works representing experiments in painted installation, including photographic and video documentation of earlier painted experiments in Brigus, Newfoundland; Erfurt, Germany; Paris, France; and Kingston, Ontario. These explorations of methods, materials and meaning of painting have been described by artist/writer Marina Roy as “site-specific installations, created under the rubric ‘The Morality of Paint’, experiments with, and meditations on, paint in relation to physical and historical space, bodily and optical experience, and memories of loss and death.”

MVTM is looking forward to bringing Tombs' work to Almonte, a town which has a regional history firmly rooted in the industrial production of textiles. It is their hope that visitors will be challenged to think differently and view the Museum's space in a new way, gaining a deeper appreciation and understanding for the intersection of art and industry.

“*Factory* will be very fitting for the Museum's industrial building and history,” explains MVTM Executive Director/Curator Michael Rikley-Lancaster. “We're excited to have an art exhibit that will play off of our building's unique space and features, highlighting them in a way that visitors don't usually think about.” Find more details at <mvmtm.ca>.

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22 <sup>97</sup>	13 <sup>97</sup>	24 <sup>97</sup>
6 <sup>97</sup>	18 <sup>47</sup>	45 <sup>47</sup>

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**FLYER SALE ENDS JANUARY 31, 2024**

# A Trio of Shows at Sivarulrasa Gallery

Beginning on February 9, Almonte's Sivarulrasa Gallery will present three new exhibitions that will run through to March 15. Everyone is welcome to attend the combined Artists Reception on Saturday, February 10 from 2–4PM.

**Marina Raike: *Rising Sky*** will run in Gallery I. This solo exhibition features new paintings by the Almonte-based artist, exploring the grace of ravens and crows she has observed in her surroundings. "Ravens and crows are the embodiment of magic and wisdom in many cultures", she says. "To some, they are bad omens; to others, the bringers of light." The works incorporate elements of both earth and sky, including minerals such as hematite, pyrite and mica.

**Gayle Kells: *Embedded*** runs in Gallery II. This deeply moving installation by the Ottawa-based artist features paintings, drawings and sculptural assemblages centred on the dress as a symbol of both beauty and pain. Continuing her exploration of identity and the female body, Kells uses vintage corsets, undergarments and found objects, embedding them with thousands of pins — straight, sequence, hair, safety or pearl — to reflect on the female form and the extent to which the body is used as an objectified site. Gayle Kells has been a member of the Enriched Bread Artists studios in Ottawa for over 25 years.

**Jane Irwin: *Talking With Vincent***, a solo exhibition in Gallery III of new works by the Toronto-based artist, is inspired by her reading of Vincent Van Gogh's letters to his brother Theo. "His honest voice and articulate writing reach across the years between his time and mine", she says. The drawings and paintings showcase views from Jane Irwin's Toronto neighbourhood, incorporating phrases from Van Gogh's letters as well as phrases from her own collection of letters, creating a conversation between past and present.

Meet artists Marina Raike, Gayle Kells, and Jane Irwin at the combined Artists Reception on Saturday February 10, 2–4PM! For more information, please visit <sivarulrasa.com>.

At right, *Petal Burst* is featured in the show *Gayle Kells: Embedded* at Sivarulrasa Gallery in Almonte



# Greening Your Home

## How to Save Money and Help the Planet

The Carleton Place Environmental Advisory Committee (CPEAC) presents "Greening Your Home: How to save money and help the planet". Come learn about heat pumps, home energy audits and retrofits, and how to get rebates from the experts on Wednesday, February 21 from 7–8:30PM in the Bob Rintoul Hall at the Carleton Place Arena. There will be presenters from the EnviroCentre (Ottawa), Climate Network Lanark, and local HVAC specialists Comfort Pro. Admission is free but pre-registration is required. Register on Eventbrite.



### Presenters

Melanie Johnston, who is the Director of Energy Programs with the EnviroCentre in Ottawa, will explain the home assessment process and its benefits. The EnviroCentre works to design and provide practical solutions to help reduce climate emissions in our communities. A home energy assessment with a Registered Energy Advisor is the first step in improving your home's energy efficiency. It is also a requirement for accessing rebate and incentive programs.

Sadie Brule, the Project Coordinator for the Climate Concierge program with Climate Network Lanark (CNL), will explain the role of CNL, some of the impacts of the new Lanark County Climate Action Plan, and the value of

the Climate Concierge program. CNL taps into its 1,000 supporters to facilitate and support collaborative efforts and actions in Lanark County to reduce the impacts of climate change. Sadie has played a lead role in the Climate Concierge program which has, to date, used the power of community and sharing to support 45 local homeowners in navigating their way through the complexities of the numerous home energy programs and services. She also sits on the Climate Change Action Panel for the Town of Perth and volunteers for The Table Community Food Centre.

Tom Dlugosz, owner of the local HVAC company Comfort Pro in Carleton Place, along with Steve Greaterex, who is Comfort Pro's home solutions advisor, will close out the presentations. They will explain the different types of heat pumps available, review popular options for the Greener Homes Grant, and outline what savings can be expected.

The presentations will be followed by brief question and answer period.

This free event is perfect for anyone wanting to reduce their home energy bills or thinking about updating their heating and cooling systems. And as bonus, you can help the planet too! For more information, please contact Colin MacDuff at <cpeac@townofcarletonplace.ca>.

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# An Artistic Legacy

## 4As Thank Outgoing President Laurel Cook

By Kathryn Stevens

Known for her enthusiasm, leadership, passion, and last but certainly not least for her artistic abilities, Laurel Cook recently stepped down as the president of the Almonte and Area Artists Association. The 4As (as the organization is known) wish to recognize and thank Laurel for all her years of devotion to promoting and building the community art group, and for her enduring energy for public art.



Artist and outgoing 4A president Laurel Cook will be greatly missed, but will still participate in local shows like Art in the Attic

The 4A's main show is Art in the Attic, held each Mother's Day weekend at the Old Town Hall in Almonte. Along with Laurel's many responsibilities as 4A president she also directed this spring show. With her typical enthusiasm and organizational skills, she raised the many volunteers required to help with the unbelievable number of tasks required to put this show together for that special weekend.

Laurel is especially supportive of the "new" artist. She is a great mentor, instructor and promoter of new artists. Some of these started out as recreational artists, some as post-retirement artists just coming back into the joy of producing art, and still others have been working on their art for many years. Laurel is always willing to talk to artists who have not previously been involved in associations, nor shown their work. She is helpful in her critique of artwork and encourages them to stretch out and show their work. She has often said that artists grow in skill and confidence when they participate in art shows. Any artist who has come across

Laurel in their journey has much to thank her for. She still is an enthusiastic leader who believes in promoting artists, however their journey began.

Thankfully, Laurel is still a member of the Association and is deeply involved in her art and local shows. Laurel's signature animal portraiture includes paintings of whimsical "character pets" as well as pets as we experience them in everyday life. Most recently she has turned her substantial talents to creating outdoor art that combines the traditional barn quilt with cheery farm and domestic animals. Just looking at them makes you smile.

Laurel is a force of nature when it comes to public art, and has spearheaded many public 4A art projects that can be found across all wards of Mississippi Mills. These include the Almonte Farmers' Market mural in the parking lot behind upper Mill Street, the Mill Street streetscape in the corridor between the Almonte General Hospital and Fairview Manor, the 32 individual panels representing the textile mills of the Mississippi Valley (on display at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum), and the metal street banners in Almonte, Appleton, Clayton and Pakenham. One completed art project is still awaiting installation along the OVRT. The 4A membership is looking forward to the potential of even more public art with Laurel's assistance.

Laurel and her husband recently moved to the Eganville area where she continues to beautify and energize her new community. Look for her large-scale barn quilts and murals in the area, and her artistic signage on local businesses. She has also been instrumental in starting the "Bonnechere Valley Inspired" art and local food tour, which takes place on the August long weekend. Long may her force continue!

You can see Laurel's art at the Pakenham Maple Run Tour on the weekend of April 6 and 7 <mapleruntour.com>, and the Almonte Art in the Attic show on Mother's Day weekend <almonteartintheattic.wordpress.com>. For more information about the Almonte and Area Artists Association, email <donna.mitchell850@gmail.com> with "information on 4A" in the subject line.

## Keep the Fun Going this Winter at MERA

This winter, MERA (McDonalds Corners/Elphin Recreation & Arts) has plenty of fun activities for all ages. Come out to the Schoolhouse in McDonalds Corners to stay connected to your community.

The MERA Fibre Arts group is now meeting on Tuesday evenings from 6-8PM. If you have a project on the go, bring it and share what you are doing. Want to learn how to knit, crochet, rug hook, embroider or spin fibre? They can help you out! The kettle is always on and snacks may show up now and then. All are welcome to be part of this wonderful group of creative people. Email Michele at <lanarklady1@yahoo.ca> for more details.

The Winter Speaker Series returns this year with a new roster of experts in their own fields. Talks are scheduled on Thursday evenings from January 18 through to February 15. Cozy up at home, as the Speakers Series will be held over Zoom from 7-8:30PM. Speakers and topics include Michael Rikley-Lancaster on Finding Treasures Among Your Posses-

sions; Ross Elliott and Liz Maltby on How to Travel with a Clear Conscience: Tips and Tricks for Ethical Tourists; Carrie Buchanan on What are These Things Called Podcasts?; Linda Kruus on Exploring Cohousing; and Sanjeev Sivarulrasa on In Search of Pristine Skies. Registration information can be found at <meraschoolhouse.org>.

MERA's regular programming includes art circles, fibre arts, heritage weaving, pottery and quilting. There's always a lot going on! Subscribe to the newsletter to stay in touch and learn about regular programs as well as upcoming events and workshops. Please email MERA's friendly administrator at <meraschoolhouse@gmail.com> to be added to the newsletter.

MERA is committed to facilitating and promoting activities and programs for all ages which help bring this rural community together, and to promoting awareness and understanding of the arts and wellbeing. For more details, visit <meraschoolhouse.org>.

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- Therapeutic Riding Program - ConnectWell
- Stewart Park Festival
- Lanark Highlands Public Library
- Lanark County Basic Income Network
- Middleville & District Museum
- The Perth & District Union Library
- The Hospice Hub
- Climate Network Lanark
- South Lanark Community Garden
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# Heyday at The Cove

On Friday, February 9, jazz fans from near and far will want to be at The Cove Inn in Westport to catch bassist RJ LeBlanc playing from his latest album *Heyday*. He will be joined by Erika Angell on voice, Jérôme Beaulieu on keyboards, Kevin Warren on drums and Nicolas Ferron on guitar, and the show will also feature alto saxophonist Allison Au.

Montreal-based Rémi-Jean (RJ) LeBlanc has been active on the Canadian music scene since 2005 and has collaborated with an array of musicians in Montreal and in Canada including Yannick Rieu, Jean-Michel Pilc, Marianne Trudel, Steve Amirault, Carol Welsman, Elizabeth Shepherd, the CNJO and l'Orchestre national de jazz de Montréal. RJ has also toured extensively with different groups in Europe, China, Japan, Mexico, the US and Canada, and has performed with international artists such as David Binney, Seamus Blake, Greg Osby, Terri Lyne Carrington, Jeff Ballard, Ari Hoenig, Gilad Hekselman, Ben Wendel and Billy Hart. RJ has been on faculty at McGill University since 2017.

Released in December of 2022, *Heyday* is RJ's fourth album. A wide range of influences characterizes the repertoire, hailing from post-rock to RnB and beyond, while tastefully keeping the spirit of jazz as



Jazz bassist RJ LeBlanc brings his latest project, *Heyday*, to The Cove on February 9. Playing with him will be Erika Angell, Jérôme Beaulieu, Kevin Warren and Nicolas Ferron.

a common thread. It is performed by an eclectic and highly energetic band that mixes finesse and feel-good in a beautiful way.

This is a dinner and show event that runs from 7–11 PM. Find more details and reserve your spot by visiting [coveinn.com](http://coveinn.com) or calling 273-3636.

# 100 Acts of Kindness by the Lawyers of Lanark County

By Holly Agnew

A man walks past a tombstone. It reads, 'Here lies Martin. A lawyer and an honest man.' The man chuckles to himself. "They have three people buried in one grave?"

It's fun to pick on lawyers. A quick Google search produces hundreds of good lawyer jokes, about how they charge too much or how they take too long to finish a file. Or worse yet — how they lie for a living. Even Shakespeare seemingly got into the act when the character "Dick the Butcher" declares in *Henry VI*: "The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers."

Did even Shakespeare hate lawyers?

The lawyers of Lanark County are determined to prove all the jokes wrong. The County of Lanark Law Association ("COLLA") turns 100 on January 21, 2024. To mark the occasion, the board extended a challenge to its membership: would the lawyers of Lanark County commit to performing 100 random acts of kindness in our community?

The answer was a resounding YES. Already, members of COLLA have performed and logged more than 60 random acts of kindness towards their goal of 100.

It is a fact that lawyers are often one of the most service-oriented groups of people in any town. Most lawyers want to make a positive difference in the world, and they do this by volunteering their time and talents in their communities. It starts in law school — for example, Queen's Law students must walk by an inscription from the Gospel of Luke every day on their way to class — "To whom much is given, much will be expected." Many bar associations encourage their members to volunteer as part of their ethical responsibility as civic-minded members of society.

When the gauntlet was thrown down by the COLLA executive, lawyers all over Lanark County responded, often with acts of kindness that they were already performing as good members of the community.

Lawyers in our community raise thousands of dollars for various charities, such as the Hunger Stop Food

Bank, the Duncan J. Schouler School Breakfast Program and the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation. Some volunteer with their churches as choir directors, choir members, eucharistic ministers and sacramental prep coordinators. They sponsor the Almonte Thunder U13B hockey team, and coach soccer and basketball. Many do pro bono work for people who cannot afford legal fees but do not qualify for legal aid.

Lawyers in our community also sit on the boards of non-profit organizations, steering committees and parent councils, and give talks at churches and libraries to educate people on estate planning. They volunteer as mentors, facilitators and charitable event organizers.

Many of them sponsor families through Interval House and Family and Children's Services, Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, and at least one lawyer is a Platinum Sponsor of 100 Women Who Care, Lanark County.

For 100 years, lawyers have been serving the people of Lanark County, both inside and outside of their law offices. The current members of COLLA are proud to continue this tradition into the second century of its existence. The list of random acts of kindness will continue to grow to 100 and beyond as 2024 begins.

But back to Shakespeare. If lawyers do so much good, why did Shakespeare want to kill them?

Taken out of context, it seems like Shakespeare hated lawyers. But the opposite is true. The violent revolutionaries in *Henry VI* (including Dick the Butcher) wanted to overthrow the King and replace him with their own regime. In order to do this, they would have to kill the guardians of law and order — the lawyers. Lawyers protect society from lawlessness and anarchy. Therefore, in context, we see that Shakespeare actually viewed lawyers as essential to a just and orderly society.

Everybody laughs at lawyer jokes — even lawyers — but let's not forget all the good that lawyers do in our community. Congratulations to COLLA on its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and here's to another 100 years of service to the people of Lanark County.

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Marl Lake Nature Reserve surrounds Marl Lake, a shallow bay of Palmerston Lake near Ompah

## Local Land Trust Receives Fantastic Christmas Gift!

Not everyone can say they received a new property for Christmas, but such was the case for the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust (MMLT) this holiday season.

In late November 2023, Kay Cartwright approached MMLT with a vision to protect her 256-acre property in Frontenac County from future development. Kay came to the right place; land trusts like MMLT work on behalf of the people and communities in the region to preserve ecologically valuable areas for the long term. Fueled by Kay's determination and the dedicated efforts of MMLT staff and directors, the transition from initial inquiry to a sealed transfer was completed in less than a month!

MMLT is now the proud owner of Marl Lake Nature Reserve, an ecological gem located in North Frontenac Township near the small village of Ompah. The property borders the Palmerston-Canonto Conservation Area (244 acres) and is near two Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). Its wetlands contribute critical ecosystem services to the Mississippi River watershed.

On a chilly visit in December, members of the MMLT team explored the property's bedrock ridges, vegetated wetlands and

upland forests. The forests boast a full range of tree species typical of the area, including eastern hemlock, basswood, sugar maple, large-toothed aspen and more. While a more extensive biological survey is planned for the spring, initial records already highlight at least 10 species-at-risk in the vicinity, such as the snapping turtle, evening grosbeak and eastern wood-pewee.

Looking ahead, MMLT plans to open Marl Lake Nature Reserve to the public for hiking and nature experiences. Future property stewardship plans may involve the development of trails, informative signage, and a designated parking area. If you're feeling inspired and would like to contribute to the long-term stewardship of MMLT's new acquisition, you can make a donation online at <mmlt.ca> or by calling the office at 253-2722.

The MMLT team expresses immense gratitude to Kay Cartwright for her generous donation of lands for MMLT to protect in perpetuity. This donation expands MMLT's portfolio to 12 protected properties, covering 3,384 acres across the Mississippi River watershed, extending north to the Madawaska River watershed. Here's to more conservation triumphs in 2024!

## It's Never Too Late

By Steve Stresman

Lou Beaudoin, now 95, enjoys life with family, friends and his beloved model aircraft. A resident of Almonte, he has family close by, friends that visit often, and he tries to get out as much as possible to fly his remote-control aircraft both outdoors at the local flying field in the summer, and at the local indoor soccer field in the winter. His smaller aircraft are used indoors, and the larger ones are for outdoor use, with some of the larger ones having a FPV (first person view) set up. This allows the pilot a view from the aircraft through a camera on the aircraft, and goggles worn by the pilot, in real time. Local club experts assist Lou with his aircraft set-up when required, with Lou being ever so grateful. With a joke close at hand and his positive lighthearted personality, it's always a pleasure being around Lou to take in his wit and wisdom.

Lou didn't start into the RC (remote control) world with aircraft, as his first passion was in racing boats, which started in 1981 at Andrew Hayden Park in Ottawa. This was close to where Lou lived at the time. Boats were more relaxing compared to planes, he advises, and a lot of fun to build and race. After moving to the Almonte area, Lou said flying was handy and close, which made it easier than driving to go boating, so at the age of 88 he started into flying with the help of local friends and flying club instruc-

tors. "I wish I started flying in my younger days, as boats are nothing like flying," he notes. "Flying takes more attention and concentration. Electric planes are easier than nitro planes, so that's what I own and fly."

Lou did not fly much during the pandemic, but as restrictions have eased he is now flying again both indoors and outdoors. "The local flying community are a group of good people and that is what it's all about," says Lou, describing his flying buddies.

Happy flying, Lou.



Lou Beaudoin started flying model aircraft at age 88, and is still enjoying the hobby at 95!

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19

# Mississippi Mills FAMILY DAY ACTIVITIES

### FAMILY MOVIE - FREE!

Almonte Old Town Hall (14 Bridge St.) at 11AM  
MMYC is running the canteen. Movie title will be announced closer to the date. Stay tuned!

### PUBLIC SKATING - FREE!

John Levi Community Centre 1PM - 3PM (Almonte)  
Stewart Community Centre 2PM - 4PM (Pakenham)

### MILL OF KINTAIL CONSERVATION AREA

Family Day Special - FREE admission/parking  
Enjoy hiking, snowshoeing or cross country skiing (BYO equipment)

### NORTH LANARK REGIONAL MUSEUM

647 River Rd., Appleton  
Admission by donation. Open 10AM - 4PM

### MISSISSIPPI VALLEY TEXTILE MUSEUM

3 Rosamond St. E., Almonte  
Family Day FREE admission. Open 10AM - 4PM

### FULTON'S SUGAR BUSH & MAPLE SHOP

Open 10AM - 3PM. Enjoy horse drawn sleigh rides, maple taffy and a chainsaw carving demo (11AM). Trails for skiing, sliding and snowshoeing (BYO equipment). Admission \$10 per vehicle.

### MOUNT PAKENHAM

Open 9AM - 5PM  
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Saturday, February 24 @ 7:30pm  
Sunday, February 25 @ 2:00pm  
Friday, March 1 @ 7:30pm  
Saturday, March 2 @ 2:00pm

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