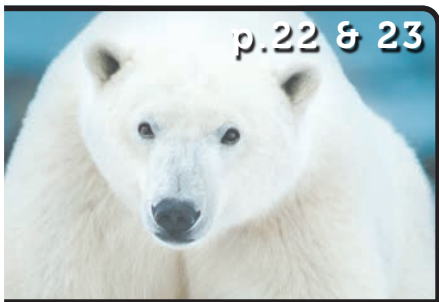


MARCH 2012

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Arts,
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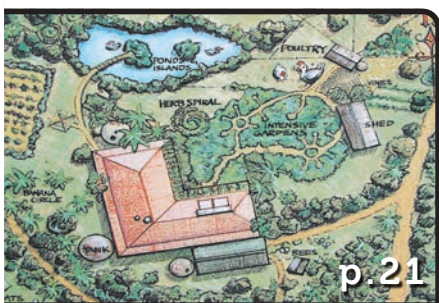
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Permaculture



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Sowing the Seeds



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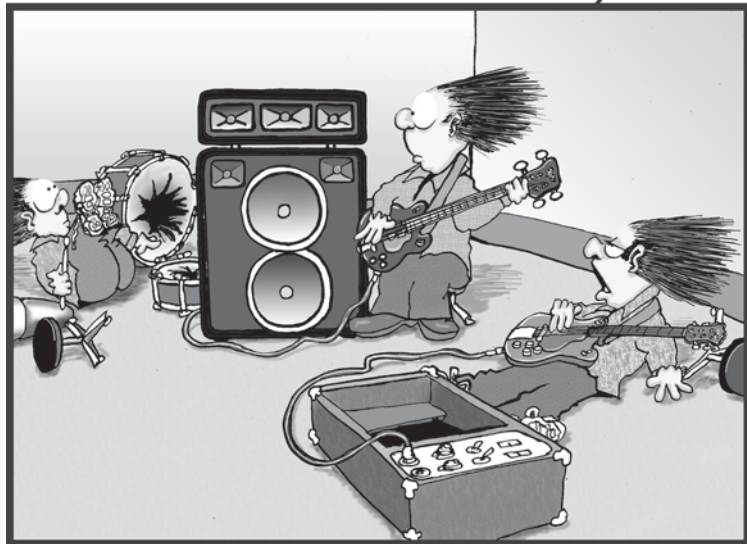
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ARTBEAT

by Bill Buttle



"Any chance you could see if that thing's at full volume BEFORE you switch it on?"

Readers Write

Correction to last month's Bus Schedule letter:

Bad news — I didn't check my facts! Not sure how important it is, but the Almonte express bus actually gets back to Almonte at 5:30PM, not 5:50PM as I originally specified in my email.

I apologize — I was working from a rather blurry photo of the schedule, and I wrote the letter over the holidays when I was continually under the influence of rum and eggnog or other festive beverages. Poor form! Not sure if it's worth printing a correction; I leave that decision in your capable hands. Again, sorry for the inconvenience, and keep up the good work!

— Danielle Wojtyniak, Proud Almonte Resident and Sloppy Citizen Journalist

We Missed One!

Here's a volunteer organization that we missed in last month's "Get Involved, Get Connected" issue:

Kiwanis Club of Perth is a service club that reaches many area municipalities. Our focus is on helping children and youth in the Perth, Carleton Place, Smiths Falls, Lombardy, Glen Tay, Lanark, and rural areas. Our members, men and women, combine philanthropy, fundraising, fellowship and fun. See <perthkiwanis.byethost4.com> or call 267-4662.

And while we're on the topic of volunteer organizations, Perth Kiwanis is getting crafty. Their latest service project is making cloth dolls for the Children's Aid Society to give to youngsters in crisis. They are currently looking for donations of clean new stuffing, embroidery yarn, and fabric — cotton or poly/cotton in bright prints or colours, minimum size of 12"x16". If you can you help sew, please call 267-4662.

Caption Correction

In our February issue, the caption that appeared beneath the photo on page 21 accompanying the article "Military Museum — A Place to Remember" was incorrect. The caption should have read: "Jack Churchill, a founding member of the Hall of Remembrance, stands with a photo of his brother, Joseph Ronald Churchill, who was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal on Nov 4, 1944." We apologize for the error.




Who's Reading theHumm

Frank Condelli (the one in mortal peril above) writes: "Here is a photo of Rita and me in La Manzanilla, Mexico with a copy of theHumm. You can read all about our adventures on our Blog at <frankcondelli.com/travels>."

Pictured below are musicians Don Paterson (right) and Dave Arthur (from Ashton). In 2010 they completed a 3-week tour of S.W. Asia where they performed as members of the backup band on a Canadian Forces-sponsored show tour. Involving Canadian singers, dancers, comics, musicians and technicians in a contemporary style, the shows are presented in the same vein as in the old Bob Hope USO tours. Shows of this nature require much hard work, a lot of logistics preparation and a lot of travel on various Armed Forces aircraft including helicopters. The visible morale-boosting affect that these shows have on our soldiers makes the entire effort unquestionably worthwhile. It is one way of showing our CF personnel there that they are cared about by the people back home. Don and Dave are "Hummm reading" at an airfield in Afghanistan. They had to get permission (security concerns) to take these photos.





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

Submissions

By email or on disk.

Deadline

is the 22nd of the month prior to publication.

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Thanks this month to:

coffee. Particularly, coffee cheerfully served by the great folks at Palms and Baker Bob's (both steps from Hummm headquarters), even though we are high-maintenance with our "half-caf" and "can I mix hot chocolate in that?" requests...

Lorraine Marie English – An Artistic Triumph

After interviewing this month's featured artist, I found myself unable to stop thinking and talking about the unique, vibrant paintings Lorraine Marie English is creating at her kitchen table in her small apartment in Perth. The acrylic canvases glow with life. They are unlike anything I have encountered in my past twelve years of writing about local artists.

by Sally Hansen

As described by Gallery Perth in our January edition, "Perth's own Lorraine English, who is drawn to rich colours, uses a heavy application of light and dark to create jewel-like depictions of trees, flowers and animals. There is a glowing byzantine quality to her work that brings to mind the mosaics of Mogul palaces and the precision of Indian miniatures — the colours sharply defined and as precisely placed as a stone in its setting."



It was Lorraine Marie's painting of a Canadian cornfield that coalesced the complicated impressions that her work made on me. I loved it as soon as I saw it. But I wasn't sure why. Lavishly decorated sunflowers boldly compete with golden ears of corn against an azure and cyan sky, all dramatically framed by an elaborately patterned, multi-hued border. There are thousands of dots of brilliant, metallic colour outlining leaves and meticulously drawn border patterns. It took me hours of research into East Indian art before it finally dawned on me what was generating the aesthetic rush I was experiencing.

In her own search for identity, Lorraine Marie has developed an original artistic voice. Quite unintentionally she has created a new language for expressing her convoluted and conflicted feelings

about being an East Indian/British immigrant in rural Canada.

Four years ago when she was forced to stop work because of debilitating health issues, Lorraine returned to her childhood interest in arts and crafts to fill her time and raise her spirits. She set out with her camera to photograph typically Canadian scenes, bought a book on painting, purchased acrylic art supplies, and sat down to work. The results did not satisfy her.

She began experimenting, striving for "whimsical interpretations of things that are already beautiful". Soon her works grew increasingly elaborate, and she introduced more and more intricate decoration. The result is a strikingly original juxtaposition of broad Indian cultural influences informing an acquired Canadian palate. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Overcoming Adversity by Celebrating Diversity

It has been a revealing and a healing journey. Lorraine Marie and her family moved to Montreal from England when she was twelve years old. It was an incredibly difficult transition for her and her younger brother. Moving to Carleton Place alleviated the language difficulties, but the torment she suffered for being "different" is immediately evident on her face when she begins to recount her unhappiness as a victim of prejudice. Thirty-five years later she began gradually accepting and even embracing her cultural inheritance through her art.

It is an exceptionally rich culture from which to draw. This quote from <wiki.ask.com/Indian_art> is helpful: "Indian Art is the visual art produced on the Indian subcontinent from about the 3rd millennium BC to modern times. To viewers schooled in the Western tradition, Indian art may seem overly ornate and sensuous; appreciation of its refinement comes only gradually, as a rule. Voluptuous feeling is given unusually free expression in Indian culture. A strong sense of design is also characteristic of Indian art and can be observed in its modern as well as in its traditional forms."

It took me no time to appreciate Lorraine Marie's art, and others are sharing my enthusiasm. Recently a woman who had bought two works at Gallery Perth called to tell her how delighted she was with her purchases; the next day the Gallery called to tell Lorraine the woman had purchased two more. She confides that she is still surprised that at a show in 2009 at Brush Strokes in Carleton Place, "all of a sudden I was a big success!"

It is not surprising. A Canadian sensibility lavishly embellished with an Indian aesthetic is a brilliant and welcome addition to our sometimes restrained artis-



tic landscape. Lorraine Marie's canvases combine an assured decorative hand with an underlying spontaneity. Like the Indian Miniaturist painters, she represents "the 'real' as (s)he has 'realised' it, a thing not as it has been but as it has been perceived, that is, a reality re-cast, or re-modeled first by perception and then by art treatment." <exoticindiaart.com>

Her art celebrates her love of nature and beauty, and her previously unconscious and unexpressed connection to her East Indian roots. Traditional subjects like India's national bird, the peacock, and the elephant, recur in her paintings. Many are lavishly, meticulously adorned with borders and outlines and decorations executed in gem-like colours. Some are executed so finely they remind me of Crewelwork; others suggest beadwork.

Lorraine Marie describes herself as quiet and having a somewhat hidden personality. "Painting gives me a way of expressing myself boldly, and has brought to me a confidence that I did not have. It has revealed some broken places in me and has been a joy to my heart." By embracing her cultural roots she finds she is healing the wounds she experienced and disowned long ago.

Although her health constrains her output, she has committed to be the featured artist at Brush Strokes in June, 2013. In the meantime, some of her work is available there at 129 Bridge Street in Carleton Place (253-8088, brushstrokesart.ca). Even though Gallery Perth is taking a sabbatical until April, you can see works by Lorraine Marie English next door at the Perth Picture Framing Gallery, Code's Mill, 17 Wilson Street East (264-8338). Click on "Enter Here" at <galleryperth.com> to feast your colour-deprived Canadian winter eyes on the exuberant new Anglo/Indian art language she has invented. She can be reached at 326-0277 and by email at <lm_english@hotmail.com>.



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WHO Lorraine Marie English

WHAT Acrylics Painter

WHERE Brush Strokes, 129 Bridge St., Carleton Place, 253-8088, <brushstrokesart.ca>

Gallery Perth and Perth Picture Framing Gallery, 17 Wilson St. E. (Code's Mill), 264-8338 <galleryperth.com>

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WHY "Painting has healed some broken places in me, and has been a joy to my heart."

ARTIST TRADING CARD

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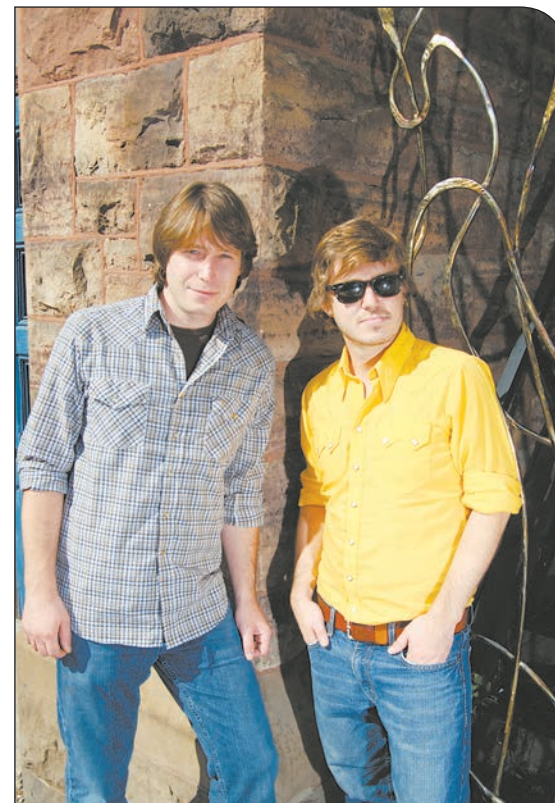
Silver Creek/Brothers Chaffey Play March 24

Almonte's Folkus Concert Series concludes its highly successful 2011/2012 season on Saturday, March 24, with an all-Ottawa double bill featuring Silver Creek and the Brothers Chaffey.

Silver Creek came together in 2006 and, after a few rehearsals based around a handful of songs, the band immediately began recording. They made their transition from the studio to the stage easily, playing their first show at Bluesfest in 2006 and being invited back for the following three years, including opening for Blue Rodeo on the main stage to a crowd of 20,000. Since then Silver Creek has been building a strong and faithful fan base across Canada.

The band has two albums to its credit. The first, *About Time*, was released in 2008, with songs that convey fundamental truths of the human experience. Topics of love, heartache, soulful summertime musings, and the cold foreboding Canadian winter mix with heartfelt lyrics and catchy melodies for an unforgettable sound. Silver Creek's second album, a six-song EP entitled *Follow the Sun*, followed a year later, and is a full-throttle foray into Northern-fried rock and soul that showcases the band's strong songwriting and musical abilities. It further develops their new-old sound in a way that is unquestionably original but also reminiscent of the sound of such groups as The Band, The Allman Brothers, and Neil Young. Their live shows are always exciting and powerful, with soaring three-part harmonies and strong instrumentation. Their Almonte show will treat audience members to material from their brand new third record, *Princes and Kings* (released last December).

The second half of Folkus's double bill presents another Ottawa band, the **Brothers Chaffey**. This group is fronted by brothers Curtis and Matthew Chaffey and was founded in 2004. Since then the band has toured from coast to coast in Canada and has a strong fan base in cities such as Halifax, Toronto and Ottawa. Like Silver Creek, Brothers Chaffey have played at Ottawa's Bluesfest, attracting enthusiastic crowds three years in a row with their solid up-tempo, dancehall, roots, rock 'n' roll sound. They released their first CD, *Harbord*



This season's final Folkus concert features two Ottawa bands: the Brothers Chaffey (above) and Silver Creek (below left)

Street Soul, in 2005 and followed it with *Bloodlines* in 2009. For their second album they teamed up with producer Ken Friesen (Tragically Hip/The Sadies/Hawksley Workman) and, with a new jazz drummer added to the mix, they continue this collaboration as they record their third album in Almonte. On this album their style evolves as they expand their soul and blues sound to give it centre stage. Theirs is not a soul sound that merely revives Motown, however. They refer to it as neo-soul — something new and not rooted in nostalgia. As they work to streamline their sound, they are a band to watch closely, as we all anticipate their CD release date in spring 2012.

Together these bands promise concert-goers an opportunity to hear brand new music from two groups whose stars are on the rise. Silver Creek and the Brothers Chaffey can be seen in concert at the Almonte Old Town Hall on Saturday, March 24. The show starts at 8PM, with doors opening at 7:30PM. Single show tickets are available at a cost of \$27 for adults and \$12 for students. They may be purchased at the door on the evening of the show, for those willing to take the risk. Those wanting to secure a seat ahead of time can call Mill Street Books at 256-9090 for ticket orders. For information, visit <folkusalmonte.ca>.



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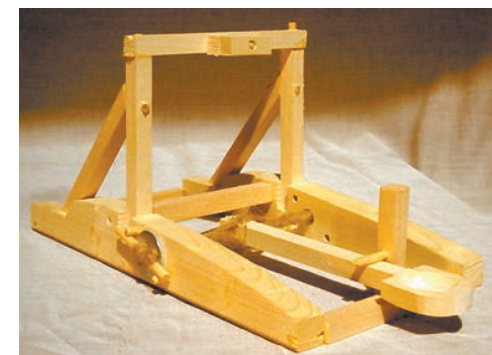
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Steel Magnolias — A Story for Everyone

Romance, conflict, heartbreak, laughter and tears — you'll experience them all in Studio Theatre's spring production of *Steel Magnolias*, by Robert Harling. This comedy-drama set in a beauty salon in rural Louisiana features six women who, over the course of the play, deal with comic discord, family problems, and personal tragedy. The title says it all: these women may be as delicate as magnolias, but when life deals them a devastating blow, they reveal themselves to be strong as steel.

Director Kathie Reid, who has a long history in theatre and was one of the nominees for Best New Director at the 2009 Eastern Ontario Drama League One-Act Play Festival, is plunging into direction of her first full-length play. She has a stellar cast of actors, most of whom will be familiar to Studio Theatre audiences. Cindi Bates, who plays Ousier, the cantankerous widow, appeared in last spring's production of *Rabbit Hole* as Nat, the scattered but deeply caring grandmother. Laurie Reesor, who plays the headstrong young Shelby (for the second time in her career!), shared an award for ensemble acting at last year's one-act play festival, for *The Christmas Tree*. Grace Main delighted audiences as the flustered Mrs. Chumley in the 2009 production of *Harvey*, and returns as Shelby's mother M'Lynn. Janet Rice, the redoubtable Mrs. Baker in last fall's *A Month of Sundays*, is Clairee, the former mayor's wife. Although it is Janice Reid's first Studio Theatre produc-

tion, many will remember her from Barn Door Productions and Perth Community Choir. She plays Truvy, the salon owner and den-mother of the group. Jacqueline Ramsay, Truvy's impulsive new assistant Annelle, made her first stage appearance ever in Orion Productions' smash hit *The Full Monty*.

But a great cast and director would be lost without a great crew, and Kathie and producer Paul Roach have assembled that as well. Roberta Peets has taken over as stage manager, that indispensable despot who ensures that the rehearsals and performances run like clockwork. The lighting/sound technician, without whom, the stage would be silent and bare, is Yogi Sepp. Members of the wardrobe department, who must find age-, role- and time-appropriate costumes for the actors, include Ann and Robin Hawthorn, and Marie Amyot. Brenda Roberts will serve as dresser. Props, a challenging task for a play set in a 1980s hair dressing salon, are handled by Marg Wilkinson and

Jean Cooke. Lucas Tennant, more often seen on stage, will act this time as chief of backstage crew. And as always, the reliable Reiner Silberhorn and Bruce Neil are in charge of constructing the creative set of designer Earl Sonnenburg.

"What's great about this play is the story, the drama, the relationships. It's a story about family, which men are part of. It's a beautiful, beautiful story and who wouldn't be interested in a story of such depth and compassion. It's universal."

Director Kathie Reid agrees. "It's a very empowering message to any gender."

Steel Magnolias opens March 22, almost exactly 25 years to the day of its debut off-Broadway in 1987. It runs March 22, 23, 24, 30, 31 at 8PM as well as March 25 and April 1 at 2PM. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$22 at the door and available at The Book Nook or Tickets Please in Perth. Phone or credit card orders can be made through Tickets Please at 39 Foster Street, 485-3434 or <ticketsplease.ca>. There is a student rate of \$10 (with I.D.) at the door. For further information, call the Studio Theatre box office at 267-7469 or visit <studiotheatreperth.com>.

If you're looking for an anniversary or birthday present, why not give the gift of entertainment? Tickets are available for this show and the upcoming production of *Doubt* in May. To order, call Diane at 264-8862.



The cast of *Steel Magnolias*: top row (l-r) Grace Main (M'Lynn), Janice Reid (Truvy), Janet Rice (Clairee); bottom row (l-r) Jacqueline Ramsey (Annelle), Laurie Reesor (Shelby), Cindi Bates (Ouiser).

There has been some criticism that *Steel Magnolias* is basically "chick lit", that is, a story about women and women's interests. But that criticism overlooks its underlying theme. As Janice Reid says,




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5th Annual Seedy Sunday Calling All Gardeners & Local Food Enthusiasts!

The 5th annual **Seedy Sunday** in the Ottawa Valley will be held on Sunday, March 4, from 10AM to 3PM, in the cafeteria auditorium of Fellowes High School (420 Bell Street in Pembroke). Admission is free. All new and experienced gardeners, local food lovers and the curious will want to attend!

Seedy Sunday is a remarkable phenomenon that continues to catch on across Canada. Gardeners, seed savers, seed vendors, local food producers, organic practitioners and environmental groups come together at a venue where they can learn from one another, exchange ideas and seeds, and purchase seeds and plants, all in a fun social setting. It's a day to learn about and promote local food, more sustainable methods of growing, and the preservation and use of heirloom, organic and open-pollinated seeds.

Please remember to bring any of your own seeds, cuttings, plants or gardening treasures to exchange at the Swap Table!

Presentations during the day are free. Presenters have a wealth of knowledge to share, and welcome all your questions! The first talk is at 10:30AM: learning about "Wild & Homegrown Plants for Natural Skin Care" with Sigrid Geddes of Sigrid Natural Skin Care, followed at 11:30AM by Faris Ahmed of USC Canada with "Banking Diversity: Why Save Seeds". At 12:30PM, it's "Having Fun In Your Raised Beds" with Debra Lloyd, then explore "How We

Connect to Nature" with Ole Hendrickson of the Ottawa River Institute and Rob Cunningham of the Pembroke Area Field Naturalists at 1:30PM. Bring your questions to the presentations or visit them at their exhibits. Don't miss this opportunity to meet with these presenters and with the many other fantastic exhibitors who will be happy to answer all of your questions!

Food and refreshments will be available. A local lunch prepared by the Fellowes Culinary Arts students will be sold between 11AM and 2PM by the Ottawa Valley Food Co-operative <ottawavalleyfood.org>. Enjoy the local foods of the Valley, learn more about the co-op, meet some of the co-op producers, and pick up your copy of the *Local Food Buying Guide* for the Upper Ottawa Valley.

There are lots of activities throughout the day. Visit the Fellowes Greenhouse. Enjoy the buskers' corner, featuring some wonderful local musicians. Take part in the silent auction and possibly win one of many door prizes.

Seedy Sunday is a non-profit event operated by volunteers and sponsored by the Ottawa River Institute <ottawariverinstitute.ca>. Net proceeds will be donated to Seeds of Diversity <seeds.ca>, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of heritage seeds.

The Occupy Movement Comes To Carleton Place

Most people will remember when the Occupy Wall Street movement was front page news last fall, with its call for a more equitable and environmentally-sustainable economic system, its challenge to the power of multinational corporations, and its innovative forms of direct leaderless democracy. Starting in September, the movement took just a few weeks to spread to more than 1000 cities around the world, including Ottawa, Kingston, Montreal and Toronto. While most Occupy camps have been dismantled and the movement rarely makes the mainstream news these days, it is actually still growing — as evidenced by the new and very active Occupy Lanark County (OLC) group that has been operating since early January.

On Sunday, March 25, Occupy Lanark County's outreach group will introduce the idea to the Carleton Place/Almonte community via a Meet The Occupation event at Ballygiblin's Restaurant, 151 Bridge Street, Carleton Place, at 2PM. Hosted by Carleton Place resident Peter Brown and featuring presentations by some of the most active veterans of both Occupy Ottawa and OLC, the idea is to offer the story behind the headlines: why so many people came to this movement, why it has been so influential, and where it can go from here.

Contact <OccupyLanarkCounty.org> for information, or check out the OLC Facebook pages. Or best of all, join them at Ballygiblin's on March 25.

— Peter Brown

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Seeds for Thought

As I look out the window this afternoon at the driving snow being blown in by a late winter storm, I am reminded of wonder. How tremendous it is that in a matter of weeks the landscape will transform. Winter's white, hard, icy freeze will succumb, softening under the quiet press of stronger sun. The

by Susie Osler

earthy smell of warming, moist soil will thicken the air. And seeds, roots and shoots, all taking their cues from light, temperature, moisture, and some sort of insistent biological memory, will push and pulse through the confines of their winter skins, and begin to paint the landscape with a million shades of green. To me, this is nothing short of miraculous. Yet, the complete and perfect journey a seed takes from germination to fruiting to setting seed for the manifestation of future generations, is simply overlooked by many.

So, what about spending some of our energies as a society coming up with celebrations, or rituals that honour and celebrate the power of seeds? Say... "National (or Local) Seed Saviours Day". Could it replace "Family Day"? Something akin to this idea (though not yet a national holiday) has been happening quietly under our noses for the last decade or so, in locations all around the country. Initiated by passionate seed savers and organizations interested in preserving and promoting heritage seeds and genetic diversity, "Seedy Saturdays" (and Sundays) have become the real harbinger of spring for gardeners and farmers. They offer an opportunity to swap seeds and

other garden-related items, to learn about seed saving, and to source usual and unusual varieties of heritage seeds that have often been grown close to home. The Perth Farmers' Market has organized the third annual Seedy Sunday at the Perth Legion, and it is *the* place to be this March 4! For experienced and inexperienced gardeners alike, as well as for the curious, the event will have something to offer and to inspire, and will be a great place to ask questions and get helpful advice on seed varieties to suit your needs.

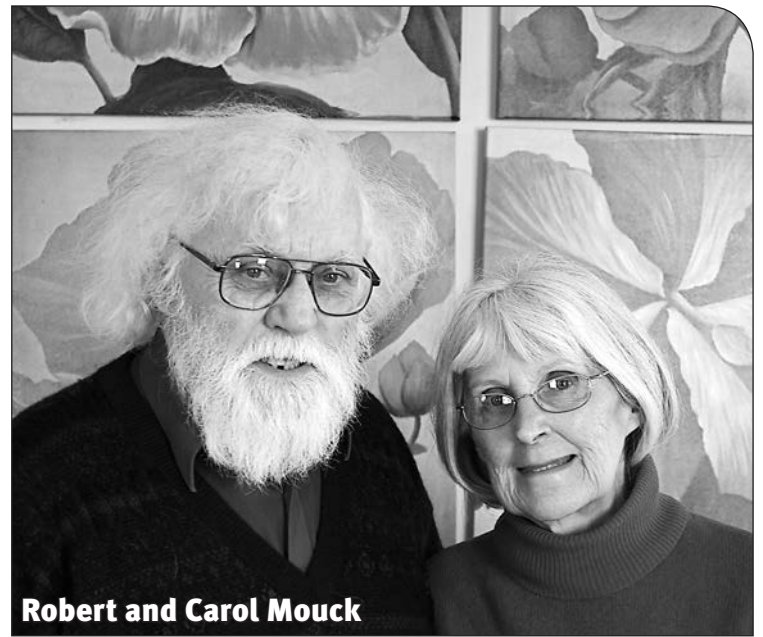
One of the highlights of Perth's Seedy Sunday will be the slide presentation by Carol and Robert Mouck, which has been organized by EcoPerth. The Moucks have had a rich 40+ years of experience in seed selection and collecting, and are widely known in Ontario and beyond for their efforts in promoting seed saving. This is certain to be a wonderful, and inspiring, hour or so.

Carol and Robert exude a quiet confidence and groundedness, both as individuals and as a couple. Years of sharing observations and insights from the garden seem to have nurtured a deep if not profound intimacy between them, and with their seeds, the earth, and the growing cycle. For the past four decades their "story" has included seventeen years of homesteading at Foxfire Farm, the first certified organic farm in eastern Ontario, where they raised sheep, vegetables, Percherons (draft horses), heritage grains they milled on-site, and soybeans they sold to tofu makers; seven years of market gardening at a smaller farm near Napanee where they moved (with their seeds) when the physical demands of Foxfire began taking its toll on their bodies; a stint in Vermont; and the found-

ing of The Heirloom Seed Sanctuary at the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul in Kingston <providence.ca/?cat=30>. Now, they are mentoring a few young passionate farmers — passing forward their 140 years of combined life experience and showing them how to take on the responsibility of ensuring the "collected stories" continue for over 450 varieties of seeds (their collection).

To speak of seeds having stories may seem a bit odd, but within each little particle is the memory of hundreds, sometimes thousands, of generations, combined with or built into a genetic code, that enables the seed to perpetuate itself and adapt to myriad conditions year upon year. In the human realm, seeds also accumulate the stories and lore we contrive for them in the form of names, descriptions, characteristics, growing conditions, and sometimes their unique histories — where they originated from and migrated to, and through whose hands. Doing this can be a real art and some of the best identifications, according to the Moucks, can be found in the old books — pre-photography — in which things were accurately catalogued and identified based on careful observation. Some people still do this, but for most, the desire for instantaneous identification via photographs and access to infinite amounts of information on the internet may have dulled our abilities to sense subtle nuances and relationships that go on in our gardens (not online), that are useful not only in identification but also in growing and propagating future generations. Attention to heat, moisture, neighbouring plants, insects, soil quality, weeds, fruit and leaf quality, taste, etc. and the resilience, failure or changes of that year's seeds compared to the previous year's, all become part of a repository of information specific to individual gardens and the seeds that mature in it. Over several years, seeds adapt uniquely to the "terroir" of that farm or garden.

Learning to grow one's food from seed — selecting plants to grow out for seed, harvesting the seeds, and then storing and identifying them properly — is a vital first step towards food security. The Moucks point out that small-scale producers, in fact backyard gardeners, have fundamental roles to play if we are to preserve,



Robert and Carol Mouck

Who They Are

Carol and Robert Mouck
Keeping the Harvest for Food and Seed

What They Offer

A slide presentation on "Keeping the Harvest for Food and Seed" at 11AM on Sunday, March 4 as part of **Seedy Sunday** at the Perth Legion (10AM–3PM). A presentation on "Beneficial Insects and Pollinators of the Garden" by Maureen Bostock will follow at 1PM. Other participating organizations include local seed vendors (Yuko's Open Pollinated Seeds, Heritage Seed and Produce, Terra Edibles), farmers' market vendors, Transition Kingston, Nature Lover's Bookstore, Seeds of Diversity, Occupy Lanark, Perth and District Food Bank, Master Gardeners, Perth Horticultural Society, Canadian Organic Growers, NFU Local 310. For information contact Sarah Mackenzie at <smackenzie@juno.com> or 284-0578.

or better yet, regain the genetic diversity that we've lost since the '50s. Locking up seeds in vaults in large international seed banks — well intended as this might be — disrupts the continuous accumulation of the creative, adaptive potential stored within the seed itself that occurs through successive, continuous planting and harvesting in diverse conditions and climates. Much worse, however, is our collective handing off to multinational corporations the ability to control what seeds are selected (uniformity, size and transportability become more important than taste, variety and nutrient value); how they are propagated (think GMOs, chemicals, monocultures); and what varieties we as consumers do and don't have access to.

Over the course of their lifetimes, the Moucks have noted a shocking decline in available seed varieties — something that has coincided with the decline in small-scale vegetable gardening — and the prevalence of seed companies as sources for our seeds. The current groundswell in popularity for growing food is heartening, but they emphasize that seed saving needs to be-

come an integral part of growing food. Seed saving is something they have dedicated their lives to. Seeds are spoken of like cherished old friends and it is clear that Carol and Robert do not want to let these "friends" down. Nonetheless, they note it need not be an onerous task. It is important to view the responsibility as a joy; to not be afraid of making mistakes, because mistakes will inevitably be made and can lead to numerous insights; and to just begin by jumping in.

A garden is like a continuously changing, never-ending work of art. Opening the senses, intuition and mind to the powerful, creative energy of seeds can be nothing short of profound. Who knows — perhaps seed saving will become the antidote for the busy, high-octane, information-overloaded lives we lead these days! Visit Seedy Sunday to hear more about the Moucks' experience and how you can start saving seed (11AM). Another presentation by Maureen Bostock on Beneficial Insects and Pollinators in the Garden (these guys are often necessary for seed production) will follow at 1PM. Admission is free.

EcoPerth



Small-Flock Laying-Hen Workshops

Held throughout Lanark County
Next Workshops: April 1st & 15th 2012

For information & to pre-register contact:

info@ecoperth.on.ca

Learn how to pasture-raise a small flock of laying hens (2-20) in your backyard or small farm.

Also: 2012 Tree Sale: 8 species of bare-root seedlings
Pre-order for pick-up May 5th: <www.ecoperth.on.ca>

www.fieldworkproject.com

Driving, Kissing and Pancakes with Picasso (and All in Westport!)

If you know Westport at all, you'll know The Cove Country Inn (I may have mentioned it once or twice myself). And if you know The Cove Country Inn, you'll know the Cowans — they are, after all, the heartbeat of The Cove.

by Steve Scanlon

For the uninitiated, The Cove is an inn in the truest sense of the word, complete with fine dining and entertainment, and is, in many ways, the heart of Westport. The Cove Inn is where you go to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, family holidays or... successfully mowing the lawn. The Cove is the spot for weddings, receptions, meetings, or a burger with a cold beer on a hot day. The Cowans manage to do this all with a very personal touch; a member of the family is almost always on hand with a kind word. It may be just to say "hello" or "welcome to The Cove" or, more likely, "welcome back to The Cove," but the touch is personal and you know it's heartfelt.

You would think that juggling all this would be enough but no, there's more. Along with all the day-to-day stuff

that goes into running an enterprise like The Cove, and all the special events such as wine tastings, Groundhog Day celebrations and Mardi Gras nights, the Cowans also host Blues on the Rideau, a series of blues artists and bands playing monthly to sold-out crowds. March is no exception.

March 17 brings three brothers — Duane, Brooke and Cory — and best friend Mark Aye, as **Blackburn**, a Toronto-based blues band and winner of the 2010 Maple Blues award for Best New Band. A little bit of funk, a little bit of soul, some R&B in the mix, and a whole lotta groove. And Blackburn even sounds Irish, so the timing is right.

And it's not only blues being played. March 9 is a special night of Jazz with the **Chet Doxas Quartet**. Hailing from Montreal and New York City, Chet Doxas, one of Canada's eminent saxophonists, has pooled some of New York City's best young jazz musicians for an evening of his original compositions. Matt Stevens on guitar, Zack Lober on bass and Eric Doob on drums complete the quartet. This will prove to be an evening to remember.

Sticking with the theme of original music, another thing that two of the Cowans do is play music — lots and lots of

music. On any given night, Jeff and Seamus Cowan (on drums and bass respectively) can be seen playing up a storm on stage with any of the bands performing. Albert Einstein (you know, that genius guy) once said: "Any man who can drive safely while kissing a pretty girl is simply not giving the kiss the attentions it deserves." I say "Phooey." I may not be a genius (you, in the back — stop giggling... I know I'm not, okay), but the way I see it is Jeff and Seamus have a hand in making The Cove the success it is, and they also have a hand in making great music — it's what they do and they do it well. Yes, they drive, kiss and have a great vibe all at the same time — take *that*, Albert!

Prime example: check them out playing with their own band, **Spoon River**, on March 23. The band came together with the help of Tavis Triance, following the breakup of The Royal Mountain Band of Montreal. After a tiny hiatus of two years (what's two years between friends), Spoon River is back recording their second CD, a follow up to their first, *Kingdom of the Burned*, and will be unveiling some new material at the show. Dig The Band? Neil Young? Johnny Cash? Dusty back roads and open windows? Windblown hair and a grinding song on the radio? Then go see these guys. Do it. If not for me, then do it for yourself — you deserve it! Check them out at <spoonriverband.com>.

Just to give you a little extra push in the right direction, the **Rueben deGroot Band** is playing on the same bill. This Kingston-based band combines a hint of John Prine, The Band, a pinch of Lyle Lovett and just a smidge of Dwight Yoakam, thrown into a pot of pure Rueben deGroot.



This month in Westport you can catch Chet Doxas (below left) on the 9th, Blackburn (above) on the 17th, and Spoon River on the 23rd!

The sound is familiar but with all original roots. Check out their CD, *Hey!* <ruebendegroot.com>. All of the Cove shows tend to sell out early, so you may want to call ahead and reserve.

To sum up:

The Cove Country Inn = A great place to stay, a great place to eat and a great place to be entertained. The Cowan Family = Great hosts, fine musicians, and a lovely giving family.

Caveat lector: The Cove Country Inn and the Cowan family don't do this alone — they have an incredible, dedicated staff and they would be the first people to recognize them.

Also in March (under the heading "last, but definitely not least"), **Artemisia** and **The Wordsmith** are sponsoring "Breakfast with the Arts, Westport Style" — a series of potluck breakfasts (or breakie) being held on the last Saturday

of every month. So, here's the way it works: the coffee will be perking at 7:30AM, meet up and babble until 8:30 (ish) and beginning at 8:30 (ish) there will be a speaker... umm... speaking on a variety of arts-related subjects. March brings Ken Rose (aka The Sandman) to the podium. Want to know what the talk is going to be about? Assemble your favorite breakfast treats (yes, some assembly is required), enough to feed five or six like-minded folks, pack your favorite knife, fork, spoon and plate, don't forget your mug, and head out to Upstage (upstairs at The Wordsmith) to find out. While you're there, between mouthfuls, share some time talking about your love of the arts in your community. Art and breakfast, I see the beginning of a beautiful friendship... who knew? Pancakes and Picasso anyone?



Drawing Lessons

with Cathy Blake and Elizabeth Veninga
April 3–June 20 (8 weeks)

Location: Old Almonte Town Hall or TBA

Adults — Beginner Drawing Tuesdays, 2–4PM, \$120

Adults — Intermediate Drawing Wednesdays, 2–4PM, \$120

Adults — Advanced Drawing with Expeditions
to draw in various locations, time and day
to be arranged. 8 weeks, \$120

For information or registration for the classes above
call 256-0108, or email: catherine.blake7@gmail.com

Adults — Life Drawing Tuesdays, 7–9PM
Old Town Hall (with Elizabeth Veninga) fee TBA

For information or registration for this class only
call 624-5931, or email: chiselndraw@vif.com



The Perth Community Choir

is inviting proposals for the
Fall 2012 Show.

Proposals to include an
Artistic Director,
Musical Director
and show selection.

Deadline for proposals is
Friday, March 30th, 2012.

Written proposals to be sent
to 84 Harvey Street,
Perth, Ontario K7H 1X2

Learning in Almonte

Two new courses starting in March:

David Holmes:

The Future of Science in the 21st Century

An examination of possible renewable energies and a discussion of the options. What new science is needed?

Starting Wednesday, 14 March

Michael Gnarowski:

Literature and Censorship: WHY?

Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Zola's *Nana*, Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Nabokov's *Lolita*, and even Margaret Laurence have attracted censure or censorship. How come?

Starting Thursday, 15 March

Both courses run from 1:30-3:30 for six weeks
in the Almonte Public Library Classroom.

No final exam, but lots of discussion time! \$75 per course.

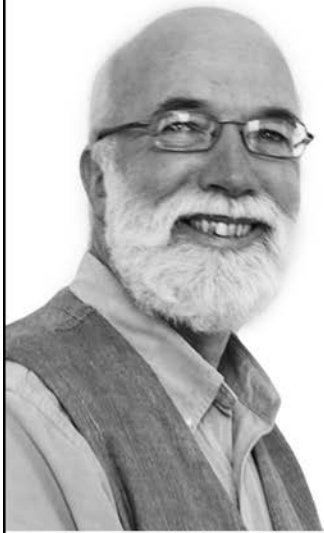
To register contact Don Wiles at 256-4376 or
don_wiles@carleton.ca

2011 Tax Tip

The maximum \$10,000 limit for allowable medical expenses per eligible dependent has been removed. Claim on Line 331 the total amount over the lesser of \$2,052 or 3% of the dependent's net income.

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Ottawa Valley FAMILY HEALTH TEAM

Relocation of Almonte Family Physicians' Offices

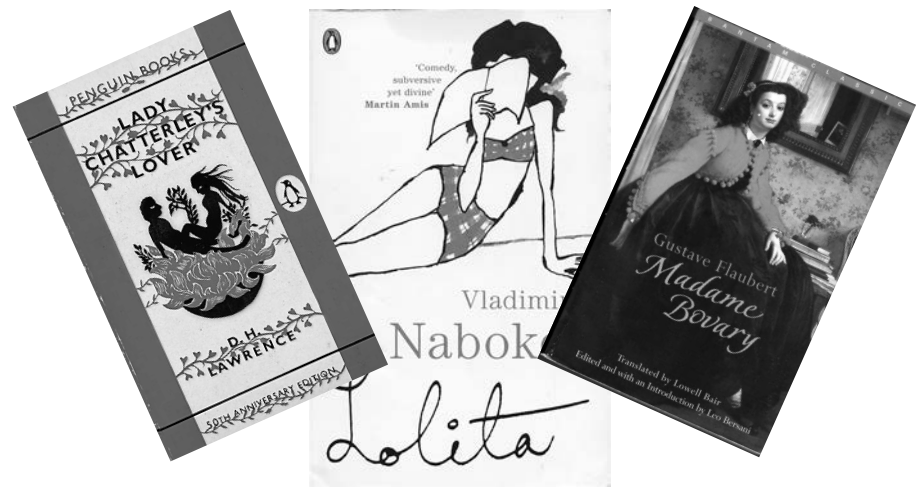
The family physicians who belong to the Ottawa Valley Family Health Team are moving from their current offices into a single clinic location at 95 Spring Street (the renovated first floor of the former Fairview Manor building).

The physicians moving are Dr. Heather Abramenko, Dr. William Blaine, Dr. Christiane Deschenes, Dr. Mike Dolan, Dr. Franz Ferraris, Dr. Melissa Forbes, Dr. Ursula McGarry, Dr. Graeme McKillop, Dr. Jody Murray, Dr. Anne Oldfield, and Dr. Cecil Rytwinski.

The office moves began in late February 2012 and will continue over a period of at least five weeks. Once each physician's move is complete, patients will see their physician at 95 Spring Street, not at that physician's former office. During the relocation period, your physician's office will contact you in advance of a scheduled appointment to confirm the appointment location.

For current information about
the status of each physician's move, please visit
www.ovfht.ca
or call 613-256-9370.

Thank you for your patience during our move.



Oooh, It's the Naughty Bits...

Remember when you were a teenager, and the latest D.H. Lawrence book was *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and all the kids knew what was on a certain page? "Unspeakable smut," we were told! So what did we do? We all got a copy, snuck it into a dark corner, and read and re-read those bits. Never mind that we didn't know the whole plot — we didn't care — we'd read the censored parts.

You're grown up now, and the very books you were warned against are now classy literature, and you will be able to revisit four of these novels guilt-free for the upcoming **Learning in Almonte** course beginning Thursday, March 15, at the Almonte Public Library.

Well-known professor Michael Gnarowski will present the six-week lecture series called **Literature and Censorship — Why?** based on four classics: Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, and Nabokov's *Lolita*. If you don't have the well-thumbed edition from your youth, the four novels are available at the library or through Mill Street Books in Almonte (256-9090).

The six lectures will cover censorship, societal taboos, and state and church in-

tervention in censorship, as well as discussions of each novel. It will be interesting to compare the idea of censorship at the time these novels were published, to that of the present day.

The Learning in Almonte series has been running for a few years now, with diverse topics from science to literature. Renowned professors for each subject have enlightened the audience in a relaxed but professional manner, with just the right amount of intellectual stimulation to get lively discussion in every session. The courses run for six weeks, two hours a session. With no exams, no essays to write, and nothing to do but enjoy the "brain exercise", these courses are winners in every way.

Registration is easy. Contact Don Wiles at <don_wiles@carleton.ca> to reserve your spot. Cost of the course is \$75 — a real bargain for twelve hours of stimulating conversation with like-minded people. The library room only holds about 35 excited learners, so it would be wise to register now. It's not quite spring yet, and this course is sure to be inspiration for those bright spring days when fancies run to thoughts of romance!

— Glenda Jones

On Safari: Good Folks, Good Food, Good Cause Fundraiser for On Stage For Kids

On Stage For Kids is once again offering residents of the Mississippi Mills area a great opportunity to meet and socialize with each other. Participants are required to prepare one part of a three-course dinner — appetizer, main dish or dessert. They are told which part they will be preparing ahead of time, but no one knows where they will be going for their other courses until the day of the event, and no one knows who is coming to their home until they arrive! After each course the assembled party splits up and heads to their next venues, to eat with another group of people. Finally, everyone gets together at The Barley Mow at the end of the evening.

If you are new to the area or just looking to expand your social network, this is

a great opportunity to meet new people. A minimum donation of \$20 per couple is required to participate. Please email <info@onstageforkids.com> to take part in this year's event.

The Safari Dinner is an annual fundraiser for On Stage For Kids and, as such, helps to ensure the future of the children's entertainment series. The date for this eighth annual event is Saturday, April 28.

Everyone is welcome on a Safari Dinner and new participants are desirable. There is no rule that says you must participate with your spouse. If he or she is not available, invite a friend! If you live too far outside of town, organizers can help place you at an in-town kitchen. There is always a way to make it work.

Don't You Know I'm Logo?

Disclaimer: please consult your family physician, therapist, barista and mom before heeding any of the following advice. Got a question? Send Miss Write an email at misswrite@thehummm.com.

Dear Miss Write,
My partner and I have been operating our own business for five years

by Emily Arbour

now. Before opening, a friend of the family generously offered to design our logo. I hate it. After half a decade in business however, people recognize it as our brand. Is it too late to change it?
Sincerely, Branded for Life?

Dear, Branded (can I call you Brandy?)

Consistency is certainly an important part of brand recognition, but it's not uncommon for businesses to update their image to keep up with the times. If you hate your logo, by all means change it! That said, if you've been in business for five years, it's probably doing you some favours, so my advice would be to adapt what you've already got going on rather than embark upon a complete reinvention. The colours in your original logo are probably most significant. I would recommend keeping them as is and modifying the font or imagery instead. Actually, what I would really recommend is hiring a graphic designer to do it for you. Your logo is the face of your brand and, I think you'll find, worth the investment.

Miss Write

Dear Miss Write,

This isn't so much an advice question, but I thought you still might be able to help. It seems everyone is talking about blogs these days. Am I missing something? What is a blog and why would I want to read one? And besides that, the Internet is so huge... how does one even *find* a blog they'd want to read if in fact they *did* want to read blogs?
Yours, Blogless
P.S. How much wood can a woodchuck chuck?

Dear Blogless,

Blogs (or "web logs") in a nutshell are online journals written by individuals or groups about anything and everything. They've become popular because of their ease of use and accessibility. Anyone and their uncle can write a blog. They're not all great, but some are sweet little finds written by sharp-witted, informed folks who we might not otherwise hear from. Some bloggers use them as personal diaries of their day-to-day, others as forums for expressing an opinion on a particular subject, and even more use them as marketing tools for their businesses. What makes them especially great is that followers have the ability to ask questions of the writer, post comments, and connect with like-minded individuals all over this great planet of ours. Let it be known, however, that, like most things we can find on the w-w-w, blogs are not necessarily your most reliable source for factual information. Most are based on a singular person's take on a subject. Like little virtual soapboxes. Personally, blogs are my single most favourite way to find inspiration and information on subjects I'm curious about and waste a perfectly good afternoon.

Finding a blog that interests you is as simple as Googling a topic. (And though my spell-check is picking up the word "Googling" as mistakenly spelled, the blog "Googling Google" is backing me up on this one.) Once you've found a blog you enjoy, it will link to other blogs that "it" enjoys. And so on and so forth until spending your precious free time actually being productive is but a distant memory.
Sincerely, Miss Write
P.S. Ask my grandpa. Sounds like something he'd know.

Dear Miss Write,

My nine-year-old wants a cell phone. Should I get her one? I really don't want to, but I also realize that the times they are a changin'.
Call me

Dear Call me,

My daughter may only be three years old, but with all the worrying about the future I like to do, this scenario has crossed my mind. Personally, I wish we could all live on tree-lined cul-de-sacs and just yell at our friends from our porches. Alas. Nine seems a bit young, but I suppose if giving her a cell phone is something that helps you, it'd be OK in my books. Maybe she walks home from school on her own and it would give you peace of mind to be able to call when she's running late. If that is the case, go for it.

My advice would be to find one without all the bells and whistles so she's not overly proud of owning it. I'd also suggest purchasing a pay-as-you-go plan and requiring that she cover the cost of any calls above and beyond those made to home, to teach her about the financial responsibility of having her own phone. (If you got her a dog, she'd have to scoop

the poop wouldn't she?) Lastly, talk to your plan provider about your ability to program certain numbers into the device so you can limit her access to that dimple-faced Romeo in her drama class with Bieber vibe. I don't care if he's eight. I don't like the cut of his jib.

— Emily Arbour is a freelance writer (among other things) who lives and works in Almonte, Ontario. By no means is she an expert in anything but having an opinion and making things up. You can go ahead and take her advice, but you'd probably do just as well taking VCR digital clock setting tips from your great aunt Agnes. Only difference is she doesn't have a column in this fine publication.

Expressive Arts Bereavement Groups

Community Home Support — Lanark County is once again offering expressive arts bereavement groups for children, teens and adults, beginning in March. These groups run for eight weeks, at the Perth office. They are free of charge and facilitated by Julie McIntyre, an experienced art therapist, as well as trained hospice volunteers who are also professionals.

Last fall, three groups were successfully completed for bereaved children (7 to 12), teens (13 to 17) and adults, using modalities such as visual arts, poetry, drama, movement, games, journaling, mask and doll making, and storytelling. Participants indicated that being in a safe environment where they could share their own experience of loss, and connect to others who understood, was a great opportunity to feel supported. A new aspect to this year's program is that teens who have already experienced this group will be co-facilitators and mentors in the new groups.

Expressive therapy uses creative arts such as music, dance, drama and writing as a form of healing. The most important concept is that using the imagination to create art helps promote mental and physical health. When this type of therapy is used as treatment, the act of creating is given more importance than producing a completed work of art.

The use of expressive arts in grief and bereavement work has many beneficial effects and can promote healing, integration and connection in a group setting. No artistic talent is required or expected, and there is no judgement on the work completed. Everyone is encouraged to use the art making within the group for their own healing and to continue the process at home after the completion of the group.

For more information or to register for an upcoming group, please contact Rebecca Bowie at <rebeccab@chslc.ca> or 267-6400. Community Home Support-Lanark County is supported by the South East LHIN, the United Way of Lanark County and community donations.

— Julie McIntyre

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Need a Spring Tonic? Try a Maple Break!

It's time to plan a trip to your local sugar bush! With all the warm weather this winter, spring may come early. Historical records of syrup making in Lanark County indicate that the syrup season usually started in late March or early April. The season seems, on average, to have advanced by two weeks and, in fact, we have made syrup in February. It pays to be ready in order to catch that first run of sap.

Every year we have new visitors at our sugar camp who are not familiar with the process of making maple syrup. The most frequently asked question is: "Do you have to put a new hole in the tree each year?" The answer is yes. The tap hole begins to heal as soon as it is made and, in the course of four or five weeks, the tree no longer runs sap from it. The run can be extended by re-drilling the tap hole. You can see the healing process at work on a broken branch. The sap runs from the branch on the first warm day but quickly stops due to buildup of bacteria on the exposed wood. I guess the word "tap" implies, to the novice, that we can turn it on and off. I wish we could.

The second question is: "Is that sap? It looks like water." Since maple syrup is golden brown in colour, most people expect a coloured sap. It is the boiling process that creates the colour in maple syrup.

Another question often asked is: "How do you know which trees are maple trees?" I tell them it's easy — the maples are the ones with buckets or tubing. But then I mention the maple leaf on the Canadian flag and the spreading nature of maple branches. It's not always easy to spot the maples without their leaves. I'm still being reminded of my mistakes in tapping an oak, a basswood and a butternut, thinking they were maples. At the end of a long day in the sugar bush, all the trunks begin to look very similar and you have to look up at the branches to be sure of the species. Most syrup makers have also tapped trees whose tops have broken off — easy to do if you don't look up at the top.

Visitors see our big sap storage tanks and envision tanker truck-loads of syrup, so they ask: "How much syrup do you make?" Our main tank holds 8000 litres of sap, which at a ratio of 40/1 will produce about 200 litres of syrup. This gives visitors an idea of the work required to make even a small quantity of syrup. And when they try it themselves, in the backyard, they finally appreciate what 40 to 1 really means.

In the camp, the most frequently asked question is "How do you know when it is done?" An experienced syrup maker can tell by the look of the hot syrup and the way it drips off a cold surface, like a dipper. However, to get it right, we check the temperature of the boiling syrup. Maple syrup boils at about 104°C and the boiling point is very



Taffy time at Fortune Farms with Sarah Fortune and visitors

sensitive to changes in the sugar content. The syrup needs to contain 66.5 to 68 percent sugar to meet quality standards. If the syrup is too thin it will taste watery; too thick and it will produce sugar crystals in the bottle.

And finally "Which syrup is best?" I cannot answer this question. Everyone has a taste preference. Flavour will vary from day to day during the season. The lighter syrups have a delicate maple flavour when first made, which diminishes as the syrup ages. The darker syrups are richer in flavour and tend to hold their flavour longer. We, along with other syrup producers, have noticed a growing preference for the darker syrups. It's best to do your own taste test and make your own decision. Of course if you make your own syrup, *it's* the best.

To get the season started, consider attending the annual tapping ceremony. This year the **Lanark & District tapping out party** will be held at Springdale Farms, at 1699 Galbraith Road in Clayton, on Thursday, March 15, from 10AM to 2PM. There will be music and food and a celebration of the start of a new season. Another local event of interest is the annual **pancake and fresh maple syrup breakfast** at Union Hall on Sunday, March 25.

— Ray Fortune, Fortune Farms Maple Sugar Bush

MONKEY JUNK
with opening act
Still Dangerous
March 24th
Music Starts @ 9PM
Advance Tickets: \$16.00 Door Tickets: \$19.00

TREVOR FINLAY
March 30th
Music Starts @ 9PM
Door Tickets: \$9.00

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Being Nick, and Other Puppet Stuff

When was the last time you walked into a room and instantly became the centre of attention? What about strolling down a street, only to have smile after smile directed your way? Ever been the recipient of hundreds of hugs in a single day? How about stepping onto a field at a special event with 500 people all cheering and laughing and waving... because of you! Not to mention everyone taking your photograph. Oh what the heck... Let's go big! Why not be the most animated character in a PARADE! Yes, this is the reality of being Nick.

Nick, of course, is the world famous mascot of Puppets Up! Well, at least he's famous around here. For the past seven years Nick has appeared at hundreds of events and gatherings throughout the Ottawa Valley, merrily promoting the Puppets Up! annual festival, which takes place every August in downtown Almonte. And for all those appearances, some child-at-heart volunteer has donned the colourful costume and oversized head, and taken on the persona of lovable, huggable Nick.

The guy who has probably done it the most often is Fraser Scantlebury. Yes, this mild-mannered corporate consultant

who, in the real world, deals with serious management executives, or is fundraising for the United Way Lanark County, has for years escaped into the magically silly world of Nick, skipping and dancing,



Always wanted a giant, jolly alter-ego? The folks who bring you the Puppets Up! International Puppet Festival are looking for a few good volunteers willing to don the 'Nick' suit...

jiggling and wiggling and high-fiving and hugging his way through a crowd of happy kids! How can this be possible? Can one person be so divided in character? Which is the real Fraser?

"Good question," says Fraser, laughing. "I'd like to say the 'Nick' Fraser is the

real one, because he keeps me young — letting me be a kid again, to have a lot of fun. After being Nick, my face is sore from smiling so much at the kids, and adults, who light up when they see him.

Nick's just this big cartoon character who never gets the chance to talk, but always has a smile on his face, expressing himself with his whole body and actions. Nick's actually a giant hand-puppet, that I get to climb inside. But everyone sees him as a happy-faced, teddy bear kinda guy. I love being able to be that guy once in a while — it makes me smile!"

Nick was made by professional puppeteer, puppet-maker and artistic director of Puppets Up!, Noreen Young. "He's like part of my family," says Noreen. "He lives at my house. Often, wherever I go, he goes. It's not unusual to see him sitting in the back seat of my car as I transport him to his next gig. He's even helped me make presentations to the town council. Quite a guy! And easy to have around... low maintenance."

If you think being Nick is something you'd like to try, the folks at Puppets Up! are looking for a few good volunteers. Contact Nick's manager, David Veniot, for more information at 461-0007 or <davidveniot@rogers.com>.

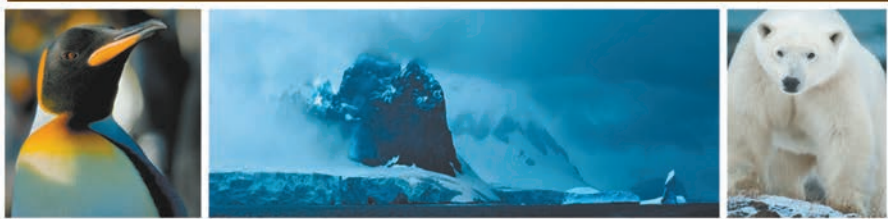
Puppets Unstrung

Everyone is most cordially invited to a very special fundraiser for the Puppets Up! International Puppet Festival. On March 26, on the Fourth Stage at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, one of Canada's most famous puppeteers, Ronnie Burkett, is taking a night off from the run of his show *Penny Plain* to give the festival a boost. He will spend an evening sharing stories and reflections about his long and hilarious career in puppetry. *Ronnie Burkett... Unstrung* is suitable for puppetry lovers over 16, and supporters of Puppets Up! More information is available at <puppetsup.ca>.



The renowned Ronnie Burkett performs in support of Puppets Up! on March 26

PENGUINS & POLAR BEARS



An evening of images of Antarctica & Canada

by Bill Pratt
and Delicious Desserts!

To Benefit
Lanark County Therapeutic Riding Program

Friday March 30, 7-9PM
Almonte United Church
106 Elgin Street

Admission \$10 at the door



Come and support our riders!

For more information call 613-257-7121 ext. 236

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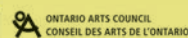
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Don't Be an Ash... Plant a Tree!

If you're walking in the forest,
And you spy among the trees
A strange creature who is hiding,
Munching on some maple keys...

A few weeks ago, your intrepid puppet reporter started hearing rumours of curious sightings. Folks living in the more rural areas of Mississippi Mills were finding tracks

by Miss Mills

in the snow that they had never seen before... tracks that seemed to have been made by a creature with distinctive M-shaped hooves... tracks that looked sort of like this:

And you close your eyes and open them
And give your head a shake -
But it's still there munching maples,
Don't assume that it's a fake!

At first I merely wrote it off as a sasquatch-esque hoax, but then people living on the outskirts of Almonte and Pakenham began reporting sightings too! And several local maple syrup producers were finding not only tracks, but also small piles of "leavings" (aka poop) that appeared to be composed primarily of maple sugar.

There could be only one explanation.
The Maplelope has returned!

Don't be questioning your senses -
Don't be thinking you're a dope!
You've got sharper eyes than others -
You just saw a Maplelope!

"What the heck is a Maplelope?!", I hear you cry? Well, intrepid reporter that I am, I visited <maplelope.ca> and found the following description: "The Maplelope is a purely fictitious and utterly imaginary denizen of the deep woods of Mississippi Mills. Like many other wild Lanark County dwellers, the Maplelope requires mixed tree cover in its habitat. It relies on trees for food, shelter, and protection from predators."

It appears that the increase in Maplelope sightings near urban areas is a result of several years of tree-planting efforts by local residents and organizations. One of the best established is the **Mississippi Mills Chamber of Commerce annual Tree Sale**, which has resulted in the planting of thousands of trees over the past twelve years. The Chamber Tree Sale has been so effective, in fact, that the Maplelope has agreed to become the official mascot of this year's event!

In order to help sell more trees, the shy and elusive Maplelope allowed local artist Sam Hamilton

<samhdesign.com> a lengthy enough glimpse that Sam was able to create the beautiful sketch you see on this page.

Plant a Tree for the Maplelope!

Here's what you can do to improve the habitat of the Maplelope (and lots of other wildlife): buy a tree from the Mississippi Mills Chamber of Commerce Tree Sale! Visit <mississippimills.com/trees> for a full catalog of beautiful shade, fruit and flowering trees, and order right there online or by calling Kathryn at 256-7464. Plant it on your property, or give it as a gift to a friend or neighbour! And here's a sweet deal — the first fifty people to place tree orders will receive a free "I Planted a Tree for the Maplelope" t-shirt, complete with a beautiful rendering of the 'lope itself by artist Sam Hamilton. All orders must be placed by Friday, April 20 for pick-up on Saturday, April 28, but hurry up and place your order soon so you can snag a t-shirt!



So if you see some M-shaped hoofprints,
Do be sure to stop and stoop;
Look around, and if you're lucky
You'll find Maplelope... "leavings" :-)

In the meantime, you can find real (OK, not real — that would be yucky) Maplelope "leavings", and perhaps even spot some tracks, at Fulton's Pancake House & Sugar Bush <fultons.ca>. If you spot a Maplelope, let the folks at Gilligallou Bird Inc. know so they can post it on their sighting board (you can find them on Facebook or in the flesh at Almonte's Heritage Court, and on weekends out at Fulton's). Go ahead and "Like" the Maplelope on Facebook, and if you're on Twitter, try tweeting "I saw a Maplelope!" (Fun will ensue...).



All Things Tree-sy

While I'm on the topic of trees, the **Mississippi Mills Beautification Committee** has also made trees a priority for 2012, and is holding a **Transplant Sale** to help keep our community green. What is a transplant you ask? Well the folks at Kings Creek Trees tell us that these "transplants" have been grown in seedbeds for three years, then dug and transplanted, giving them superior root growth and affording the tree a much healthier start. These transplants are often quite a bit larger than your average seedling. Fraser Fir (deer find them tasty), and Colorado Blue Spruce (great for windbreaks) will be available for \$2 each. Please call Bonnie at 256-1077 before April 5 to place your order. Transplants will be available for pickup on April 28 at the municipal office.

And even the drama group at **Almonte & District High School** is going out on a limb to get on the tree bandwagon. Later on this spring they will be putting on a production of the musical **Into The Woods!** Performance dates are April 27, 28, and 29, and there will be lots more information in next month's issue of *theHumm!*

Well, that's all for this month. But if you're pine-ing for a way to help beautify your area and create habitat for Maplelopes and other critters, don't forget to order your trees! It may even make you more popular with your neighbours!

Watch for our **Grand Opening!**

PÊCHES & POIVRE
from sweet to savoury

On the Menu for Weekends in March

Mar. 3 & 4	Recipe of the month — Discover a new recipe and get the ingredients you need to create it at home
Mar. 10	Meet Donna Chute from Ashton Station Garlic and taste her wonderful jams and jellies
Mar. 17 & 18	Tortilla and Salsa taste-off
Mar. 24 & 25	Surprise!

89 Mill St. Almonte 613-256-5764 fine food, fun kitchen and artful dining ware

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Daily, March 12, 13 & 14

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Tuesday, April 3 and Wednesday, April 4

to register, or for more information: (613) 839-5241
margferraro@xplornet.ca or www.ferraro-art.com

Speaking Up for Spoken Word

Is “spoken word” for you? Well, to know the answer to this question, you have to ask yourself several other questions. Do you like poetry? Writing? Theatre? Rap? Rhythm? Hip hop? Stories? Do you enjoy passion? Do you enjoy creativity and arts? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then spoken word may indeed be your cup of tea. One thing is certain—you have to experience it in order to know for sure.

I have been hooked on spoken word since the first time I experienced it in Perth in 2008. A huge thank you goes to Danielle K. L. Grégoire for making this experience possible. She had been involved in spoken word and decided to bring it to Lanark County. Her endeavours brought forth enough excitement and interest to allow for a Finals competition — which in turn provided the opportunity for Lanark County spoken word poets to compete on the national stage in Calgary in the fall of 2008. That was the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word, which is held in a different location in Canada each year.

LiPS (the Live Poets Society of Lanark County) is proud to be the first, and to my knowledge only (so far), rural group competing at the national level. If you are interested in seeing what it’s all about, or trying your hand at spoken word poetry (either in competition — known as a slam — or at the open mic), the LiPS 2012 season runs on the third Friday of each month (alternating between Carleton Place and Perth).

Our next slam is on Friday, March 16, and is being held in Perth at a new location: McMartin House at 125 Gore Street East. Doors will open at 6:30PM, and the show starts at 7PM. (If anyone wants to compete in the slam portion or participate in the open mic, they need to sign up between 6:30 and 7PM.) Admission is only \$5; free for those who are competing or performing.

If you are planning on slamming, you must perform two of your own original pieces, each three minutes or less in length. You will present one piece during round one of the competition, then the second one during round two. We welcome new poets, closet poets, old poets, renewed poets, etc.

Our April slam will be held in Carleton Place at Morphy’s Falls Restaurant (in the dining room upstairs), again on the third Friday evening (same time). We will have a marvellous feature presenter that month: Sean O’Gorman (also known as “O.G.”) — a spoken word poet not to be missed.

If you have any questions about spoken word or LiPS, please feel free to check out their Facebook page (search “LiPS”) or e-mail <lanarklips@hotmail.com>.

— Leigh Gibson

Swing Dance Revival in Carleton Place

On Saturday, March 10, Carleton Place will get a taste of the revival of interest in swing dancing that is spreading across the country. Standing Room Only (SRO), the Almonte-based 15-piece big band that has been hosting the popular Sunday Afternoon Tea Dances at the Almonte Old Town Hall for five years, will be playing for a swing dance at Tania’s Dance Studio in Carleton Place.

Swing dancing is enjoying a surprising revival in Canada. Swing dance studios and clubs have sprung up in many centres, including Ottawa. There are even inter-collegiate swing dance competitions.

The Ottawa Swing Dance Society holds a dance every Friday night at the church hall of All Saints Anglican Church in Sandy Hill. SRO has played frequently at these dances and fills the hall every time. “It’s one of the most fun engagements we play,” says drummer Chris Thompson. “150 people throwing each other around the room. Their energy inspires the band. They’re reluctant to let us stop at the end of the evening.”

The people involved in this revival come from a broad spectrum of age groups — not just nostalgic seniors. SRO trumpeter John Haysom recalls SRO’s playing at a swing dance in Perth organized by the Classic Theatre group. “Swing dance lessons were offered at the beginning of

the dance and I drove down four college-age instructors from Ottawa. We were pleasantly surprised when someone under thirty years of age asked if we could play *Jumpin’ at the Woodside*, a big Count Basie hit from the thirties.”

Similarly, free swing dance lessons will be offered at Tania’s Dance Studio on March 10 at 7PM prior to the dance’s start at 8PM. Tickets for the dance are \$15 in advance and \$18 at the door. Tickets are limited to prevent overcrowding of the dance floor. Light refreshments provided by the Ramsay Women’s

Institute are included in the admission.

Tania’s Dance Studio is located at 55 Lansdowne Avenue in Carleton Place in the former LCBO building. “We’ve renovated the building extensively,” says owner Tania Munro, “including installing the largest sprung dance floor in eastern Ontario. Even the floor finish was carefully selected to meet the stringent requirements for dancers. We’ve had several professional dancers tell us it’s the best floor they’ve ever danced on.” For more information, contact <taniassstudio.ca> or 253-0035.



The 15-piece big band Standing Room Only will play a swing dance at Tania’s Dance Studio in Carleton Place on Saturday, March 10

VOTED CANADIAN CHILDREN’S GROUP OF THE YEAR!
THIS SHOW WILL MAKE YOU LAUGH AND YOUR KIDS DANCE!

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Polar Bears & Penguins

The Photography of Bill Pratt

The Lanark County Therapeutic Riding Program is thrilled to present an evening of the exquisite photography by Bill Pratt on Friday, March 30, from 7 to 9PM, at the Almonte United Church at 106 Elgin Street. This is a rare opportunity to see the artistry of an amazing local photographer who has travelled extensively across Canada and the world to bring us images that we would otherwise never experience.

When asked about his career as a photographer, Bill explains: "I took up photography seriously in the mid-'90s when I became concerned about our national unity. Since then I have travelled to areas of our country that most Canadians don't get to, and I bring back images for AV presentations. The purpose of these presentations is to remind Canadians of the beauty and grandeur of our country, how its rugged landscape and severe climate have shaped us as a people and led to the values and the principles we stand for, and how important it is to hold it together."

This event will feature two fifteen-minute shows, with an intermission in between them to enjoy some delicious desserts and to greet your neighbours after our winter hibernation. The first show will be *South Georgia to Antarctica* and will include images of the Falkland Islands, South Georgia, South Orkney Islands, Antarctic Peninsula and the South Shetland Islands, from a trip taken by Bill in February 2011. This presentation focuses on the extreme, brooding landscape and the abundant wildlife of this extraordinary area. It will be followed by a travelogue of the trip.



View Bill Pratt's stunning photos and help raise money for the Lanark County Therapeutic Riding Association on March 30 in Almonte!

The second presentation is *My Canada, Mon Pays*. This slide show covers Canada from coast to coast to coast. The photographs were shot over a number of years and capture the feeling of Canada's wilderness and wildlife. It covers the mountainous glaciers of Bylot Island in the Eastern Arctic, the Torngat Mountains, Atlantic Provinces, central Canada, the Prairies, polar bears of Hudson Bay, barren lands of the Northwest Territories, the Rockies, the Dempster Highway and Kluane National Park in the Yukon, and Haida Gwaii National Park in the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Don't miss this fascinating evening on Friday, March 30, from 7 to 9PM, at the Almonte United Church, 106 Elgin Street in Almonte. Tickets are \$10 at the door. For more information on the Lanark County Therapeutic Riding Program visit <therapeuticriding.ca>.





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for the Maplelope!

- 🌳 Visit mississippimills.com/trees for a catalog of beautiful, nursery-grown trees — flowering, shade, and fruit. You'll even find planting tips!
- 🌳 Order by April 20 **online** or by calling Kathryn at 256-7464
- 🌳 Pick-up your trees on April 28 at the Mississippi Mills municipal office
- 🌳 The first 50 orders get a free "I Planted a Tree for the Maplelope" t-shirt!

What's a Maplelope?!?

The Maplelope is the very adorable (and imaginary) mascot of the Mississippi Mills Chamber of Commerce Tree Sale.

Like many wild critters, the Maplelope thrives in mixed forests!

Unlike many wild critters, however, the Maplelope has a cool website (www.maplelope.ca), a Facebook page, and even a Twitter account.

Try tweeting "I saw a Maplelope"...



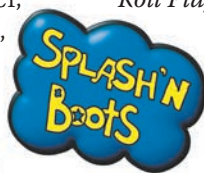
T-Shirts sponsored by Gilligallou Bird Inc.

Splash'N Boots Come Home to Perth!

Performance at PDCI on March 4

Hot off the heels of a cross-Canada theatre tour with Treehouse LIVE, Children's Music Group of the Year Splash'N Boots are returning to Boots's hometown of Perth for an unforgettable performance! With their breakthrough music video *For the Love of Dance* airing nationally on Treehouse TV for the next four years, the cutting-edge duo will perform their most hilarious and infectious hits at the Mason Theatre — located in Boots's former high school, PDCI — at 2PM on March 4. Tickets available now at 485-6434 and <ticketsplease.ca>, with a special discount for all advanced purchases.

"I am so excited to perform at PDCI," says Taes (pronounced "Tess") Leavitt, the group's "Boots". "I love coming back to Perth — it's fun to see friends from high school and meet their babies!"



"This performance is an especially important one as it's in Boots's hometown," says Nick, aka Splash. "We've been looking forward to performing in Perth again for so long now!"

With five CDs and two full-length DVDs under their belts, as well as over 1000 international festival and theatre performances, there is no sign of slowing down for this young husband and wife team. In addition to their music video, the duo performed in eleven cities this fall with Treehouse LIVE for the Roll Play Live Animal Party tour (based on Treehouse TV's award winning show *Roll Play*).

Subsequently, the breakout pair landed an additional four music videos as well as four half-hour episodes of *Roll Play* that will air on the popular children's network in 2012 and for the next six years.

Stemming from a 2004 Queen's University class project, Splash'N Boots are constantly connected to their fans via social media channels. With a growing following on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, the two have a lot in store for 2012, including several more Kitchen Jam appearances at Sick Kids Hospital, an organization they continually support, recently donating \$1000 after selling their first thousand copies of their *Back in Yellow* CD.

For more information, including tour dates and how to purchase merchandise, please visit <splashnboots.com>.

Almonte in Concert is Off to the Races!

Almonte in Concert invites you to join them for a fun and fast-paced fundraiser at the Rideau Carleton Raceway (4837 Albion Road in Ottawa) on Friday, March 30, from 6 to 10PM. Enjoy a memorable evening at the races, and nosh on a sumptuous buffet dinner. Almonte in Concert is betting that the lively evening will be a wonderful opportunity for residents of Mississippi Mills to celebrate their creative and vibrant community.

Tickets for this not-to-be-missed event are \$40 and include an all-you-can-eat buffet, taxes and gratuity, a race program, and \$15 worth of vouchers from Rideau Carleton Raceway. A 50/50 raffle, which will take place during the event, is sure to draw interest as well.

There are also exciting promotional opportunities for businesses in Mississippi Mills wishing to showcase themselves at the event. With every ticket purchased (by

the deadline of March 21), participating businesses will receive: a race dedication in the program and chance at a pace car ride; their name on the race program cover and broadcast on all TVs at the facility and at all off-track betting sites throughout Eastern Ontario; an ad in the race program; the opportunity to display business materials, pamphlets or brochures in the dining room entrance; and a live on-air interview with the track announcer to promote the group or business.

Tickets must be purchased in advance and are available by emailing <tickets@almonteinconcert.com> or calling 256-8192. Interested businesses may also contact Chantal Guindon, Town and Country Events Coordinator at the Rideau Carleton Raceway (cguindon@rcr.net, or 822-2211 x255).

And we're off! To the races that is!

A SPECIAL BENEFIT APPEARANCE IN SUPPORT OF PUPPETS UP!
INTERNATIONAL PUPPET FESTIVAL IN ALMONTE, ONTARIO

Spend an informal evening with Canada's foremost puppeteer, Ronnie Burkett, on his "night off" during the run of his new show, *Penny Plain*, at the NAC.

Ronnie will share stories, reflections on his career in puppetry, his creative process and demonstrations with his magnificent marionettes.

TICKETS: NAC Box Office at 613-947-7000
Mill Street Books in Almonte at 613-256-9090

Monday, March 26
7:30 p.m.

Ticket price: \$25

Fourth Stage of the
National Arts Centre

Ronnie Burkett



Event suitable for fans of Ronnie Burkett, puppetry lovers 16+ and supporters of Puppets Up! International Puppet Festival



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See you this summer at Puppets Up! International Puppet Festival, August 11 & 12, 2012 in Almonte, Mississippi Mills, Ontario
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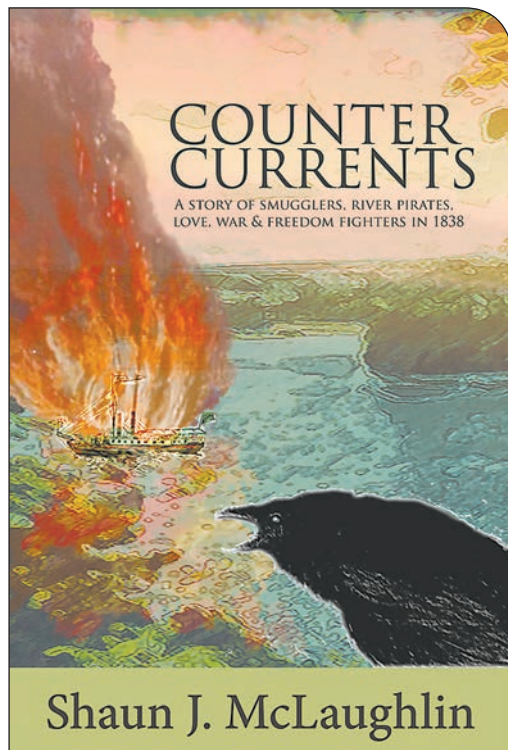
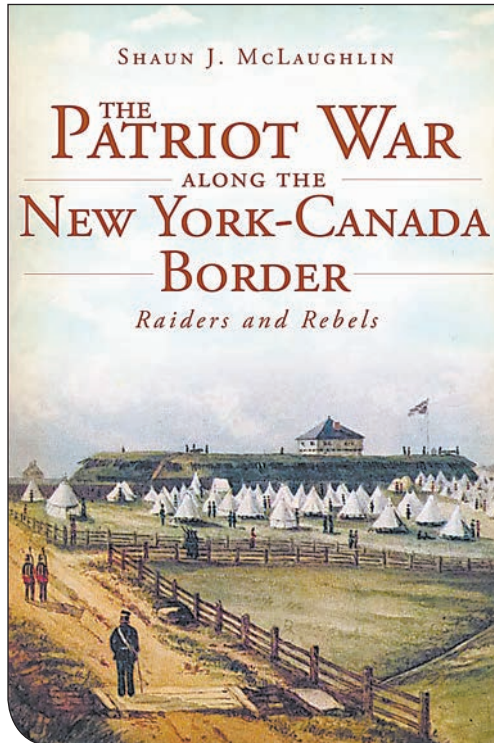
First-time Author Releases a Novel and History Book on the Patriot War

Mississippi Mills writer and town councillor Shaun J. McLaughlin has spent the last four years trying to “reinvent” himself as an author. The transformation is complete!

On March 8, McLaughlin will debut his first two books — one a history and one historical fiction — in collaboration with Mill Street Books in Almonte. Join Shaun at the Barley Mow pub for a meet-and-greet between 6:30 and 7:30PM, and stay to hear stories about the two book projects, as well as brief excerpts from each.

Both books depict events in the eastern theatre of the Patriot War. 2012 is the 175th anniversary of that war’s first shots. It is a war in which citizens of the United States, not their government, declared war on the British. Aligned with Canadian rebels, they attacked Upper and Lower Canada ten times between December 1837 and December 1838, from Michigan, Ohio, New York and Vermont.

McLaughlin’s first history book, *The Patriot War Along the New York-Canada Border*, published by South Carolina-based History Press, balances politics and culture with military history. The storytelling style makes the Patriot War accessible to casual readers and history buffs alike.



The people-focused narration is as lively to read as a page-turning novel and offers insight into the little-known war and its characters.

McLaughlin’s first self-published novel, *Counter Currents*, is a story about smugglers, river pirates, romance, war, and freedom fighters. Spanning 1837 to 1845, most scenes are set against the beauty and grandeur of the Thousand Islands during the drama of the Patriot War. Among the American raiders was the legendary Bill Johnston. A young immigrant is drawn into Johnston’s world of smuggling, piracy and secret societies, and falls for Johnston’s daughter. Tugged by the opposing currents of romance and war, he struggles to reconcile his troubled family history, his duty and his heart.

For more information on the event, contact Mill Street Books at 256-9090 or Shaun McLaughlin at 256-9834 or <smclaugh@storm.ca>.

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David Myles

ppac
Perth Performing Arts Committee

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DAVID MYLES
Friday, March 23, 2012

LUNCH AT ALLEN'S
Friday, April 13, 2012

Lunch at Allen's

Mason Theatre
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We are pleased to introduce

Rich Underhill, RMT

As a Massage Therapist, Rich has received extensive training and hands-on experience from the program he attended at the International Academy of Health Sciences in Ottawa. With a solid foundation in place Rich is very excited to join the Hands on Healing Team where he hopes to continue learning and gaining experience and sharing his knowledge with others.

Therapeutic massage may:

- Reduce or eliminate pain and tension within the muscles
- Reduce depression and anxiety
- Improve joint mobility, circulation & immune system function
- Increase lymphatic drainage
- Increase body awareness

Massage therapy benefits people of all ages. While it benefits the injured, the ill and the stressed, the real strength of massage therapy lies in prevention.

Rich is accepting new clients and is available Monday – Saturday.

To schedule an appointment, please call or email us.

Hands on Healing
125 Bridge Street, Almonte, 613-256-0222
handsonhealing@on.aibn.com

We are so thrilled that spring is upon us we want to start tweeting! Yes, that's right, what better way to celebrate spring than to tweet about it.



If you think Twitter, the online social networking phenomenon, is just for kids with too much time on their hands – think again. It is actually perfect for adults who don't want to spend a lot of time surfing the net. It is also a wonderful way to stay connected with your local community. There are several arts-focused Twitter accounts such as @infoHUMM (this is the address you type in to find *theHumM* on twitter). Most of our local maple syrup producers have Twitter accounts (@wheelersmaple and @fultonsmaple, for example) so you can get updates on when the sap is running and special events. Find all kinds of useful information such as up-to-the-minute moose and bear sightings, new restaurant openings, safety advisories, etc. It is an efficient way to keep up-to-date on the people and places that interest you. Once you have started tweeting yourself, please follow us @kellysuccess and @currentWOG. Our Twitter accounts offer all kinds of local real estate information, design ideas, local happenings, and artist updates. We look forward to reading your tweets!



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PPAC presents Lunch at Allen's (above) on April 13, and David Myles on March 23

Happy 30th, PPAC!

Great news for area music lovers! There are still two (count 'em, two) fabulous concerts left in this year's Perth Performing Arts Committee season. First up, East Coast music comes west on Friday, March 23 in the form of multi-East Coast Music Award nominee **David Myles**. David's earlier releases, *Things Have Changed* (2006) and *On The Line* (2008) had already established his reputation as a versatile, genre-bending artist with a knack for effortlessly straddling jazz, blues, folk and pop styles. David's fourth album, *Turn Time Off*, was produced by acclaimed Nova Scotia musician Joel Plaskett, and is a smooth, soul-infused pop record that pays tribute to crooners and lovers alike, and solidifies Myles's reputation as a gifted, spirited songwriter with wide appeal. A warm, easy performer, Myles brings his audiences to their feet wherever he plays. His unabashed joy at being on stage is infectious, and his enthusiasm, along with a tendency to regale his audiences with humorous anecdotes, has made him a favourite wherever he plays.

Then on Friday, April 13, PPAC offers you the opportunity to have **Lunch at Allen's**. Neither a local diner nor a songwriter's circle, Lunch At Allen's is an extraordinary musical revue by internationally renowned artists Murray McLauchlan, Cindy Church, Marc Jordan, and Ian Thomas, who perform together as a band. The stage show is an intimate and humorous performance by some of Canada's finest individual performers. Marc Jordan and Ian Thomas' songs have been recorded by everyone from Rod Stewart to Bette Midler, and Diana Ross to Santana. Murray McLauchlan's hits have covered Canadian airwaves from coast to coast. Cindy Church's voice and songs are well known on the folk festival circuit through her solo work and as a member of Quartette with Sylvia Tyson. Together, it seems as though this stellar foursome has been playing for years with an energy and freshness like they've just met.

Both shows start at 8PM at the Mason theatre in PDCI, and tickets can be purchased from Tickets Please at <ticketsplease.ca> or 485-6434.

— Kris Riendeau

Fiddle-a-thon in Maberly

The Maberly Hall will be filled with fiddlers and their friends on April 22. The **Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra** is holding a fundraising fiddle-a-thon with an open invitation to any local musician to come and play. And it's not just for fiddlers — guitars, cello, viola, mandolin, penny whistles and the like are all welcome to join in the fun. Players obtain sponsors, collect the funds and bring them to the Maberly Hall on April 22. Participants can drop in and join the jam circle anytime between 1:30 and 7PM. Participants will have the opportunity to choose tunes (or songs) for all in the circle to play (or sing). Refreshments will be available for players throughout the day.

The aim of the fiddle-a-thon is to provide a relaxed opportunity for local musicians to have fun as they play together, all the while raising funds for the fiddle orchestra. Supporting the orchestra will help to

keep amateur music alive in the community and assist in making it affordable for anyone to learn to play the fiddle and join in the fun. To obtain a sponsor sheet, contact Wolfe at <cerlichman@yahoo.com> or at 273-3986.



March Into the Theatre!

First off, if you missed the **Mississippi Mudds Youth Theatre's** production of Gilbert and Sullivan's splendid musical, *The Pirates of Penzance*, at the Carleton Place Town Hall in February, you can still catch it on March 2 at 7PM or on March 3 at 2PM. Tickets are \$15 and can be ordered from the CP Chamber of Commerce at the old train station, or by calling 257-1976.

Next up is the **Smiths Falls Community Theatre**, coming to the Station Theatre stage with Norm Foster's ever-pop-

only). Tickets are also available at Tickets Please for \$22 including convenience fee. For further details please visit <studiotheatreperth.com>.

Then the **Orion Theatre Company** is celebrating its 10th Anniversary in heels and feather boas with the multi-award winning *La Cage aux Folles*. This tells the story of an unorthodox family and a notorious nightclub in St. Tropez — also known by many through the Hollywood film *The Birdcage*. Show dates are April 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 at 8PM, with 2PM matinees on the 15th, 22nd and 29th. Tickets are \$19.50 (plus tax and fees) and are available through Tickets Please.

On the audition front, I am advised by director Jeremy Dutton that a casting call for the **Studio Theatre's** production of *Doubt* will be held at the theatre on the evenings of the 5th and 7th of March at 7PM. This is a tremendously challenging play, for both actors and audiences, having been awarded both a Pulitzer Prize and a Tony, and would really be something to be involved in, so mark your calendars! Auditionees are requested to enter by the theatre's stage door. They will be looking for three women — one younger, one older and one black (old enough to have a twelve year old son), as well as a youngish to middle-aged man. For information, call 267-6168 or email <jandpdutton@gmail.com>. Production dates are May 24 to June 3.

See you at the theatre!

by Ian Doig

ular *Drinking Alone*. Show dates are March 15, 16, 17, 22, 23 and 24 at 8PM, with a 2PM matinee on the 18th. Tickets are on sale at Compositions Art Gallery at 47 Main Street East (205-1258), for \$20, with reduced rates for seniors (\$15), students (\$10) and groups of 15 or more (\$15 each). Please note that the gallery is open Tuesdays to Fridays from noon to 7PM, Saturdays from noon to 5PM, and closed on Mondays.

Ladies (in particular!), you will not want to miss the **Studio Theatre Perth** production of *Steel Magnolias*, Robert Harling's great show, directed by Kathie Reid. Show dates are March 22, 23, 24, 30, 31 at 8PM, with 2PM matinees on March 25 and April 1. Advance tickets are \$20 and available at the box office and The Book Nook (cash

Orion Celebrates 10th Anniversary in Heels and Feather Boas!

La Cage aux Folles Opens in Perth on April 13

"Why not try to see things from a different angle?" sings the glamorous diva, Zaza, a famous drag queen performer whose partner, Georges, owns a glitzy nightclub in lovely Saint-Tropez and has a son who has just announced that he's getting married to the daughter of a politician bent on closing all the transvestite clubs on the Riviera! It's complicated. But it's hilarious, and touching, as we watch this unorthodox family struggle to stay together, stay true to themselves, and above all else, stay fabulous.

La Cage aux Folles is a brilliant piece of musical theatre with a glorious score of exceptionally hummable melodies and a dynamite cast, featuring the "notorious and dangerous Cagelles," who open the show singing "We are what we are, and what we are is an illusion." (Is it a "him" or a "her" — only the costumers know for sure!) It's a shocking, entertaining, heart-warming story that has also been transformed into the Hollywood film *The Birdcage*, starring Robin Williams and Nathan Lane. The original 1983 Broadway production received nine nominations for Tony Awards and won six, including Best Musical, Best Score and Best Book, and it's the only show that has won a Best Production Tony Award for each of its three Broadway productions.

In Orion Theatre Company's version, the fabulous couple of Albin/Zaza and Georges is played by Peter Dixon and Robert Del Grande, both well-known veterans of Perth stages. They are joined by other veterans such as Garry Welsh, Scott Somerville and Ann Hawthorne; Orion Theatre Company

stalwarts Andrew MacDougall, Ian Jenner, Gina Tremaine and Susan Bamber; relative new-comers to the stage Alfred Von Mirbach, Murray Hodgins, Geoff Hodgins and Caitlin Doyle; as well as Perth Academy of Musical Theatre alumni Satinka Schilling, Ben Vorano, Jenn Vorano, Nick Vorano, Emma Bornheimer, Connor Lyon and Mathew Baker.

This strong cast is supported by a fantastic eight-piece orchestra, under the baton of Don MacKay, with artistic and musical direction by Heidi Stepanek.

Orion Theatre Company was formed in 2002 by collaborators Peter Dixon and Heidi Stepanek, in order to provide a professional atmosphere for amateur actors, musicians and stage technicians, who love musical theatre. After the success of Orion's first eleven shows — *Rocky Horror Show*, *The Fantasticks*, *Cabaret*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Evita*, *Cats*, *Godspell*, *The Producers*, *Grease*, *Into The Woods*, and *The Full Monty*, Heidi and Peter are excited to be celebrating ten years and twelve shows with *La Cage aux Folles*.

Performances of *La Cage aux Folles* will take place at the Myriad Centre for the Arts, located at 1 Sherbrooke Street East in Perth, on April 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 at 8PM and April 15, 22, and 29 at 2PM. Tickets are \$25 (including fees and taxes) and are available through Tickets Please (in Jo's Clothes at 39 Foster Street), by calling 485-6434, or by visiting <ticketsplease.ca>.

Please note: this show displays strong notions of tolerance, acceptance and love!

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Humm Bits

Mmm... Pancakes...

Join neighbours and friends to celebrate the coming of spring with a **Pancake Breakfast** on Sunday, March 25. Enjoy buttered pancakes with lashings of local maple syrup, ham or sausages, beans or blueberries, juice, and coffee or tea. Choose a \$6 or \$8 portion. Doors are open 9AM to noon at Union Hall, corner of Wolf Grove and Tatlock Roads. The hall is maintained by the local community with the support of the Town of Mississippi Mills, and has been serving the neighbourhood for more than 150 years.

MVTM Fundraising Dance

The Friends of the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum (MVTM) invite you to an evening of country dancing and singing featuring the solid gold musical talents of the **Bowes Brothers**, from 8PM 'til midnight at the Civitan Hall in Almonte on Friday, March 30.

The Bowes Brothers are true blue sons of the soil with deep roots in Carleton Place, and their heartfelt songwriting attests to the trials and triumphs of country life. Their soulful four-part harmonies and pure country sound have earned them a place on-stage with stars like Ricky Skaggs, Ronnie Prophet and Michelle Wright. For a sampling of the Bowes Brothers' music, visit <bowesbrothers.com>. One listen confirms why they're so popular throughout the Valley. Join them for some yodelling good fun!

Tickets are \$15 each, available at Baker Bob's and the MVTM (both in Almonte), and at the door. Sandwiches and sweets will be served at 11PM, and drinks can be purchased at the bar. There will also be door prizes and a 50/50 draw.

If you would like more information about the event, please contact the MVTM at 256-3754x7 or <info@mvtm.ca>.

No Dust on this Archivist

Maureen Nevins is about to change your idea of an archivist as someone toiling away in anonymity to save the past for the future. Maureen will be speaking at the **Almonte Lecture Series** on March 23 to prove that indeed "There's Musical Gold in Them Thar Archives."

Ms Nevins has been a Musical Archivist with Library and Archives Canada since 1989, when she completed degrees in both music and archival science in Montreal and Quebec, and has been fortunate to meet Canadian musicians "up close and personal". She is familiar with Sir Ernest Macmillan, Oscar Peterson and many others whose music we all know and love. Maureen has been privy to the many photos, letters and sound recordings that go into creating exhibitions of the best of Canada's musical past, and she will share her experiences in her lecture.

Almonte in Concert reaps the benefit of her extensive knowledge as she is the artistic director for this prestigious classical music series. It will be interesting to hear how her work at the archives blends with the task of discovering music for local audiences.

Maureen Nevins will speak on March 23 at 7:30PM at the Almonte United Church. The lecture series survives on donations, so it is a golden opportunity to enrich your learning experience, meet friends, and discover the inner workings of the Canadian Archives, with a speaker who is sure to have fascinating stories to relate.

Animal Tracking Series

Learn to read the poetry of nature! Over four sessions, participants will learn about trail patterns and tracks — the telltale signs of various species — including introductory and advanced techniques for identifying even weeks-old tracks covered with snow. Sessions will include a slideshow, talk and walk, with new material being introduced each week. Participants can come for one day (\$25 per session) or all four (\$65). Youth are welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult.

The sessions take place from 12:30 to 2:30PM on March 3, 10, 25 and 31 at the Carp Ridge Learning Centre, 2386 Thomas Dolan Parkway in Carp. For directions, visit <carpridgelearningcentre.ca>. For more information about the sessions, contact 259-0249 or <chad@wildernessrhythms.com>, or visit <WildernessRhythms.com>.



Those Aren't Llamas... Welcome to Alpaca 101

Robert and I have owned our alpaca ranch in North Frontenac since 2001. When we decided to delve into the world of alpacas, most of our research took us to U.S. websites. We also visited a few Ontario farms in our quest to gather information on these elegant, South American fibre animals.

In our first year of investigating alpacas, we compiled an overflowing binder of information; it contained everything from alpaca fleece information to barn plans and marketing ideas. Our binder soon became several binders, and as the farm developed and our initial starter herd of five females grew to thirty, we realized that there had to be an easier and quicker way to educate others about the wonderful world of camelids.

Initially, our way of informing people about alpacas was by attending numerous fairs and studio tours as well as opening the farm to tours of the barn. The fairs and tours have worked well and we're still pleasantly surprised when young children correct adults when they see our alpacas: "Those aren't llamas, they're alpacas!"

We'll continue educating people through fairs, tours and festivals; however, we thoroughly enjoy the enthusiasm and hands-on participation of our annual "Alpaca 101" event. This all-day affair features hands-on care of the alpaca's physical and emotional needs. Hands-on training helps individuals access an alpaca's health and fleece quality while becoming more comfortable in alpaca care and handling. We'll touch on everything from top-knots to toenails.

Our third annual Alpaca 101 event will answer questions on startup, and include key elements of building a successful alpaca business. Register early as these limited spaces fill up very quickly. Join us for a wonderful way to welcome spring and talk about all that alpacas have to offer! Alpaca 101 takes place on March 24 from 10AM-4PM at Silent Valley Alpaca Ranch, 1120 Donaldson Road near Ompah. For more details or directions, please call 479-0307 or visit <silentvalleyalpaca.ca>. Registration is required, and breakfast and lunch are included.

— Hanne Quigley



Learn llots about alpacas (but not llamas) at the annual 'Alpaca 101' event on March 24 at Silent Valley Alpaca Ranch!

Coyotes and Wolves: Friends or Foes?

On Saturday, March 10, biologist Brent Patterson will be the guest speaker at the **Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust Conservancy (MMLTC)** annual general meeting at St. Andrews United Church in Lanark.

Brent Patterson is a field research scientist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in Peterborough, and has been an adjunct professor at Trent University since 2001. Brent's present research deals primarily with understanding the population dynamics of coyote, wolf, moose and deer. Brent cut his teeth as a wildlife biologist studying coyote life-history and leading an assessment of the effects of logging and coyote predation on deer populations in Nova Scotia from 1992 to 1997. He holds a Master's degree in Wildlife and Conservation Biology from Acadia University and a Ph.D. in biology from the University of Saskatchewan, but much of his learning has been done out in the forest, in the animals' habitat. His current research interests involve determining the proximate and ultimate factors that cause changes in the distribution and abundance of wildlife populations, and

more specifically in understanding the dynamics of vertebrate predator-prey systems.

The public will have an opportunity to learn the difference between wolves and coyotes and get more clarity about the perceived increase of these species in this area. Are our fears and irritation about these animals justified? Can our relations with them be better managed, using better strategies and techniques? Is there a balance of nature, and do wolves and coyotes have a beneficial role in it?

Dr. Patterson will attempt to answer all of these questions and more, and will bring his scientific perspective to current issues.

The meeting will take place March 10, from 2:30 to 4:30PM, at St. Andrews Church, 115 Clarence Street (turn west at the Lanark Highlands municipal offices on Highway 511). In addition to sponsoring this presentation, MMLTC looks forward to sharing the exciting events of its past year with you. Light refreshments will be served.

For further information, visit <mmltc.ca> or call 278-2939.

Garden Design: Science or Art... Discuss

It's March! You know what that means? It means we made it through February! I told you we could. And do you know what helped me get through all 29 days? Planning this column! Designing my garden, and contemplating the site preparation involved, has brought with it visions of fresh, green leaves and bold blooms bouncing in the breeze.

This is edition two in my year-long plan to focus on a different artistic interest each month. Some of you may question my categorization of gardening as art. Well, in my

by Rona Fraser

opinion, something becomes art when it changes from a mindless chore to something done with thought and feeling. Or maybe it's just in the eye of the beholder, right? And I do not simply mean the beauty of a colourful flower garden, though that is art sure enough. I believe that designing a garden for effectiveness and efficiency, by placing veggies, berries, flowers and structures in such a way that makes them all a bit happier and more successful, is quite an art. Which leads me to the pimp-daddy of all gardening concepts, in my humble opinion — and I can't believe I have made it through two whole paragraphs without telling you because it is one of my favourite things in the whole world: permaculture.

Perma-what?

Defining "permaculture" is not easy — even the book *Permaculture: In A Nutshell* is itself 84 pages! Derived from the words "permanent agriculture", as well as "permanent culture", it combines the best of traditional gardening knowledge, new scientific methods, natural building design, ethics and more, all into one big interconnected web, aimed at being a sustainable way to live. See? Not easy to define! It was developed in the '70s by Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, so let's hear it from old Bill himself: "Permaculture is a design system for creating sustainable human environments." Clear? Let me try this another way...

The core of permaculture is design, and noticing the connections between everything. You can use permaculture design to plan your garden, your home, your farmstead, or your entire town. The keys are: stepping back and considering the desired result before you start, observing natural systems and working with them, and allowing organic systems or technology to do your work for you.

Working With Your Surroundings

Here is an example of what is *not* permaculture: when people decide they want a certain style of house, and a certain location, and just build it. That is how my current home was built, which is why I don't like it. They built a compact house that faces the street. It doesn't matter that all of the sun is on the side of the house that has small windows (sure it stays cool in summer, but it is also dark and depressing). The driveway was designed without any thought to where to shovel the snow. The gardens were placed relative to the house — never mind that it is so shady there that only moss grows well.

Stacking Functions

One of my favourite "permaculture principles" is that each element should perform many functions. For instance, in selecting where to plant your marigolds, consider not only their beauty as flowers, but the fact they help repel insects from your veggies. Your shed not only protects your lawn mower but can collect rainwater, act as a windbreak, provide shelter and warmth for delicate plants, and be a wall for vines to climb.

This leads to the practice of planting in guilds. A guild is a grouping of plants that work well together, each bringing something to the relationship. An oft-used example is squash, corn, and beans: the squash covers the ground, keeping moisture in and weed seeds out, as well as deterring bugs with their hairy stems; the corn gives the beans something to climb; the beans add nitrogen to the soil which the other plants love; and they all give us food! For tips on what to plant with what, check out *Carrots Love Tomatoes* by Louise Riotte, or explore the internet, as usual.

Start Small...

When planning my garden (or life), I often consider the permaculture principle of starting small and working outward from a controlled front. We humans tend to get excited about things, choosing to "go big or go home!" But far better to start small and know you have the person-power, knowledge, finances and infrastructure to see you through, than to start big and risk your work collapsing around you. For instance, say you are seeking a location in which to open a business. You feel you could have enough business to support a large space... but you haven't even opened yet. Far better to start in one third the space and gradually expand, than to get locked into a large lease before you even know if your product will sell in this area.

Yes, much of permaculture is just good sense.

... And So Much More

There is so much I would like to tell you about permaculture, but this is a column, not a book, and I am no professional (though I do have a Permaculture Design Certificate!). I haven't even shared with you any of the actual design of my gardens!

If these words on permaculture have grabbed you like a sailor home on leave, I strongly recommend looking into it further, and perhaps attending the weekend course listed below. It transformed me from being just one chemically-enhanced plant in the middle of row upon row of the same, to being a heritage bean plant, climbing with the help of my corn(y) friends, giving some shelter to some and food to others, and working in guilds to make the world a better place. Wow. Deep...

Local permaculture and other opportunities:

- **Go outside and look around!** Stop being busy and look, and think. What works? What doesn't? And remember, the closer to your door the plants are, the more likely you are to care for them and have success.
- Check out <eonpermaculture.ca> for an **Ecological Design & Gardening: Introduction to Permaculture** course, May 25 to 27, in Ottawa, as well as a **Permaculture Convergence** in April.
- **Seedy Saturdays & Sundays** are opportunities to buy seeds, get advice on growing, and attend workshops. Local ones are all 10am–3pm: March 3 at the Ron Kolbus Lakeside Ctr in Ottawa, March 4 at the Perth Legion (26 Beckwith St. E.), and March 4 at Fellowes High School in Pembroke.

Helpful Texts:

- *Introduction to Permaculture*, by Bill Mollison
- *Earth User's Guide to Permaculture*, by Rosemary Morrow is easier to follow
- *Permaculture: A Designer's Manual*, by Bill Mollison — the permaculture bible
- *Permaculture Activist* magazine, published in the US, is both interesting and inspiring, and worked on by two of my teachers: Peter Bane and Keith Johnson

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Claiming Column

Deep Dark Woods, Burnstown, Apr 5
 Lynn Miles, Perth, Apr 7
 La Cage aux Folles, Perth, Apr 13-15, 19-22, 26-29
 Adventures Near and Far, Almonte, Apr 13
 Lunch at Allen's (PPAC), Perth, Apr 13
 Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, Perth, Apr 13-15, 19-22
 Terry Tufts, Almonte, Apr 20
 Almonte Lecture Series, Apr 20
 Poetry Slam, Carleton Place, Apr 20
 David Rotundo Band w/Julian Fauth, Westport, Apr 20-21
 Trio Hochelaga, Almonte, Apr 21
 Quartetto Gelato, Burnstown, Apr 21
 Musical Celebration of Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Perth, Apr 22
 Fiddle-a-thon, Maberly, Apr 22
 Dragon's Gold, Perth, Apr 27
 Into the Woods, Almonte, Apr 27-29
 Art in the Attic, Almonte, Apr 27-29
 Noises Off!, Carleton Place, Apr 27-29, May 4-5
 Handmade Harvest Craft Show, Almonte, May 5
 St. Paul's United Church Handbell Choir, Perth, May 6
 Young Awards Gala, Almonte, May 12
 Arlene Quinn, Perth, May 12
 Perth Regional Heritage Fair, May 17
 Dandelion Gardens Studio Tour, Westport, May 19-21
 Mississippi Mills Bicycle Month, June

Visual Arts

Vernissage, Mar. 3, 8-9:30PM. w/Cheri Robitaille & live music. Equator Café, Almonte.
 Vernissage, Mar. 9, 7-9PM. w/Aili Kurtis. Brush Strokes, Carleton Place. 253-8088
 Flippin' Art Night, Mar. 15, 5-7PM. w/Lilli Mayer & Elsie Campbell. Free munchies. Ballygiblin's, Carleton Place. 257-2031
 Almonte Quilters' Guild, Mar. 19, 7PM. Trunk show by Pam Griffin. Almonte Civitan Hall. 256-5858
 ARTiculate, Mar. 21, 7PM. David Farrar. West Carleton Arts Soc. members free, guests \$5. St. Paul's United Church, Carp, west-carletonartssociety.ca
 Maple Run Studio Tour, Mar. 24 & 25, 10AM-5PM. Self-guided studio tour in & around historic Pakenham. 624-2062, maplerun.on.ca
 Lanark County Knitting & Crocheting Guild, Mar. 27, 7PM. St. Paul's Anglican Church, Almonte. lanarkknitting@gmail.com. Guests \$5
 Lanark County Quilters Guild, Mar. 27, 7PM. w/Anne Morell Robinson. Guests \$3. Perth Lions Hall. 264-9232
 Arnprior Quilters' Guild, Mar. 28, 6:30PM. Jelly Roll workshop, making quilts for charity. Christian Education Centre, Arnprior. arnpriordistrictquiltersguild.com. \$5 entry
 MVTMAGM, Mar. 28, 7PM. Speaker Henriette Riegel of the Diefenbunker. Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Almonte.
 Vernissage, Mar. 31, 8-9:30PM. w/KEvin White & live music. Equator Café, Almonte

Literature

Book Signing/Talk, Mar. 8, 6:30PM-7:30PM, Shaun McLaughlin, author of *The Patriot War Along the New York-Canada Border & Counter Currents*. The Barley Mow, Almonte. 256-9090, millstreetbooks.com.
 LIPS Poetry Slam, Mar. 16, 7PM. Watch or perform. McMartin House, Perth. lanarklips@hotmail.com. \$5; free for performers.

WHAT'S ON IN

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brush Strokes presents Aili Kurtis <brushstrokesart.ca> Artemisia Gallery presents Sculpture AllSorts (Mar 3-25) <artemisia@kingston.net> Baker Bob's Gallery presents be Josh Hrkach with high definition photos Carp Library presents "The Promise of Spring" with the West Carleton Arts Society <westcarletonartssociety.ca> fieldwork presents land art - OOH,AH,WOW by Karina Bergmans <fieldworkproject.com> Equator Coffee Roasters presents Cheri Robitaille's original paintings Heritage House Museum presents Cultures of the World Exploration <smithsfalls.ca/heritagehouse> MVTM presents "Letters", featuring Nancy Cole's storytelling quilts <mvtm.ca> Palms Coffee Shop presents the photography of Charlie Ebbs & Richard Skrobecki's pottery <palmsonline.ca> The Mississippi Mills Chamber Gallery and Almonte Library Corridor Gallery presents Louis Helbig, "Beautiful Destruction" photos of the tar sands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kanata Civic Art Gallery presents "Fresh", <kanatagallery.ca> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jazz at Bally's, Ballygiblin's Johnny Spinks, The Barley Mow Kathryn Briggs, Cafe Postino 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditions - Doubt, Perth Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditions - Doubt, Perth Le Havre, Perth Int'l Women's Day Film, Smiths Falls Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book Signing/Talk, Almonte Johnny Spinks, The Barley Mow Peter Brown, Cafe Postino 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's W. Carleton Garden Club, Carp Women's Business Group Mtg, CP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drinking Alone, Smiths Falls Flippin' Art Night, Carleton Place Johnny Spinks, The Barley Mow Maple Syrup Tapping Out Party, Clayton MVFN Lecture, Almonte Peter Brown, Cafe Postino Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almonte Quilters' Guild, Almonte Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dance of Universal Peace, Renfrew 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARTiculate, Carp Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drinking Alone, Smiths Falls Johnny Spinks, The Barley Mow Mind-Body Healing Talk, Carp Peter Brown, Cafe Postino Steel Magnolias, Perth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almonte Hort. Society Meeting, Almonte Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knitting & Crocheting Guild, Almonte Lanark County Quilters Guild, Perth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arnprior Quilters' Guild, Arnprior MVTM AGM, Almonte Neat Sound Check, Neat Coffee Shop Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPHS & CP Community Bands, CP Johnny Spinks, The Barley Mow Peter Brown, Cafe Postino

Youth

Pirates of Penzance Jr, Mar 2 (7PM); Mar 3 (2PM). Mississippi Mudds Youth Theatre. \$15 from Arts CP, 132 Coleman St. Carleton Place Town Hall. 257-1976
 Splash'N Boots Dance Party, Mar. 4, 2PM. Fresh from TreehouseTV. Tickets at 485-6434 & ticketsplease.ca. PDCl, Perth. splashnboots.com. \$12 (\$15 at door)
 Beckwith Youth Dance, Mar. 9, 6-9PM. Rockstar theme. Brunton Community Hall, Beckwith. 257-1539, \$3
 Geronimo Stilton, visits Mar 10 & 11. Call for times to meet the mouse. Mill Street Books, Almonte. 256-9090
 On Stage For Kids, Mar. 25, 2PM. *The Puppet Tamer* by Tim Holland. \$9 at Kentfield Kids, Read's Book Shop. Naismith School, Almonte. 451-0323, onstageforkids.com

Theatre

Auditions - Doubt, Mar. 5 & 7, 7pm. For Studio Theatre's production. Studio Theatre, 63 Gore St. E., Perth. 267-6168
 Film Night International - Le Havre, Mar. 7, 2PM. Full Circle Theatre, Perth. 267-1224, filmnightperth@gmail.com, \$10
 Drinking Alone, Mar 15-17, 22-24 (8PM); Mar 18 (2PM). Tickets at Compositions (205-1258); \$20, seniors \$15, students \$10. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls.
 Steel Magnolias, Mar 22-24, 30, 31 (8PM); Mar 25 & Apr 1 (2PM). Tickets at Book Nook or ticketsplease.ca. Studio Theatre, Perth. studiotheatreperth.com. \$22; \$20 in adv.
 Spiritual Cinema Circle, Mar. 25, 2PM. Myriad Centre, Perth. 267-4819, fp@superaje.com. \$2 donation

Music

Carleton Place Talent Showcase, Mar. 3, 7PM. Proceeds to Arts CP. Mississippi School for the Arts, CP. Free
 Lyle Dillabough & the Ottawa Valley Review, Mar. 4, 7PM. \$15 at Temptations & SRC Music. St. Andrew's Church, CP.
 Tommy Hunter, Mar. 9, 7PM. PPAC, tickets at Tickets Please, 485-6434. PDCl, Perth. \$48
 Hot Licks Acoustic Jam, Mar. 10, 7-10PM. White Lake Fire Hall, 142 Burnstown Rd., White Lake. \$5 (members free)
 Jim Bryson/Jeremy Fisher, Mar. 10, 8PM. MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners. shakey acres@hotmail.com. \$20 at door
 Swing Dance, Mar. 10, 8PM (7PM dance lesson). Tania's Dance Studio, Carleton Place. taniastudio.ca. \$18; \$15 in adv
 Blackburn, Mar. 17, 7PM. Blues on the Rideau. The Cove, Westport. 1-888-COVE-INN, \$60+tx dinner & show

Cecilia String Quartet, Mar. 17, 8PM. Almonte in Concert. \$30, \$15 students at 253-3353. Almonte Old Town Hall
 Dance of Universal Peace, Mar. 20, 7PM. No experience needed. Trinity-St. Andrew's Church, Renfrew. 432-5583. By donation
 David Myles, Mar. 23, 8PM. PPAC, tickets at Tickets Please, 485-6434. PDCl, Perth. perthpac.org. \$48
 The Claytones, Mar. 23, 8PM. \$15 at Nicholson's in Pakenham or at 624-9245. Almonte Civitan Hall
 Silver Creek/Brothers Chaffey, Mar. 24, 8PM. Folkus series. \$27, students \$12 at Mill Street Books, or at door. Almonte Old Town Hall. folkusalmonte.ca
 Almonte Big Band Tea Dance, Mar. 25, 1-4PM. Almonte Old Town Hall. 692-5380, sroteadances.org. \$12 at door (cash only)
 CPHS & CP Community Bands, Mar. 29, 7:30PM. Admission by donation. Carleton Place High School

MARCH 2012

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ken Workman - Steve Earle Tribute, Almonte Kitchen Party, The Barley Mow Mark Berube & the Patriotic Few, Neat Pirates of Penzance Jr., Carleton Place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carleton Place Talent Showcase, Carleton Place Ken Workman - Steve Earle Tribute, Almonte Kevin Head, The Cove Lanark County Genealogical Society, Perth March Melt Down, Beckwith MVTM "Soup for Thought", Almonte Pirates of Penzance Jr., Carleton Place Vernissage - Paintings, Equator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APEX Jazz Band, The Royal Oak Lyle Dillabough & the Ottawa Valley Review, CP Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Seedy Sunday, Perth Seedy Sunday, Pembroke Splash'N Boots Dance Party, Perth Valley Singles Lunch, Carleton Place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beckwith Youth Dance, Beckwith Chet Doxas Quartet, The Cove Kitchen Party, The Barley Mow Steve Barrette Trio, The Swan at Carp Tommy Hunter, Perth Vernissage, Carleton Place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geronimo Stilton, Almonte Hot Licks Acoustic Jam, White Lake Jim Bryson/Jeremy Fisher, MERA Kevin Head, The Cove Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust Conservancy AGM, Lanark Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's Supper/Talent Evening, Carleton Place Swing Dance, Carleton Place The Claytones, Neat Coffee Shop White Lake Acoustic Jam, White Lake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tales/Birding Walks w/Cliff Bennett, Fulton's Geronimo Stilton, Almonte Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drinking Alone, Smiths Falls Kitchen Party, The Barley Mow Poetry Slam, Perth Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blackburn, The Cove Blaine Broderick, St. James Gate Cecilia String Quartet, Almonte Corkery Road, The Barley Mow Drinking Alone, Smiths Falls Irish Tunes with Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Johnny Spinks, The Barley Mow Retro Rockers, Valley BBQ, Carleton Place Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almonte Traditional Sing, The Barley Mow APEX Jazz Band, The Royal Oak Tales/Birding Walks w/Cliff Bennett, Fulton's Drinking Alone, Smiths Falls Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Sleigh Rides & More, Fulton's St. Pat's Party, The Cove Research Your Family Tree, Beckwith
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almonte Lecture Series, Almonte David Myles, Perth Drinking Alone, Smiths Falls James Keelaghan, Neat Coffee Shop Kitchen Party, The Barley Mow Spoon River & Rueben deGroot Band, The Cove Steel Magnolias, Perth Steve Barrette Trio, The Swan at Carp The Claytones, Almonte 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alpaca 101, Ompah Carp Ridge Potluck & Film, Carp Drinking Alone, Smiths Falls Great Green Party Chili Cook-Off, Maberly Monkey Junk/Still Dangerous, Valley BBQ Maple Run Studio Tour, Pakenham Silver Creek/Brothers Chaffey, Almonte Spring Luncheon & Bazaar, Ashton Steel Magnolias, Perth Talk: Diabetes, Carp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big Band Tea Dance, Almonte Tales/Birding Walks w/Cliff Bennett, Fulton's Current Swell, Neat Coffee Shop Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak Meet The Occupation, Carleton Place On Stage For Kids, Almonte Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Maple Run Studio Tour, Pakenham Pancake Breakfast, Almonte Spiritual Cinema Circle, Perth Steel Magnolias, Perth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakfast with Soul, Almonte Cajun Queens' Tribute, Almonte Kitchen Party, The Barley Mow Live Blood Cell Analysis, Almonte Old Time Talent Night, Lanark Pakenham Home Show, Pakenham Polar Bears & Penguins, Almonte Steel Magnolias, Perth The Bowes Brothers, Almonte Trevor Finlay, Valley BBQ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Al Wood & The Woodsmen, Neat Coffee Shop Breakfast with the Arts, Westport Food Sensitivity Testing, Almonte Pakenham Home Show, Pakenham Steel Magnolias, Perth Vernissage, Almonte 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APEX Jazz Band, The Royal Oak Tales/Birding Walks w/Cliff Bennett, Fulton's Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, Ashton Pub Pakenham Home Show, Pakenham Perth Citizens' Band Spring Concert, Perth Steel Magnolias, Perth Valley Singles Lunch, Arnprior

The Bowes Brothers, Mar. 30, 8PM. Fundraiser for MVTM. \$15 at Baker Bob's, MVTM, or door. Almonte Civitan Hall

Perth Citizens' Band Spring Concert, Apr. 1, 2PM. An Afternoon with the Classics. Perth Legion. perthband.ca. \$5/\$10 family

The Swan at Carp (Falldown Lane Carp, 839-7926), 7-10PM, no cover
Mar 9, 23 Steve Barrette Trio play jazz

St. James Gate (111 Bridge St., Carleton Place, 257-7530):
Mar 17 Blaine Broderick, 8pm

The Royal Oak (329 March Rd. Kanata, 591-3895): jazz on Sun, no cover.
Mar 4, 18 APEX Jazz Band, 2-5pm
Mar 11, 25 Magnolia Rhythm Kings, 3-6pm

The Cove (2 Bedford St., Westport, 273-3636):
Mar 3, 10 Kevin Head, 6-9pm
Mar 9 Chet Doxas Jazz Quartet, 8-11pm
Mar 18 St. Pat's Party with Chris Murphy (Crooked Wood), 1-4pm

Mar 23 Spoon River & Rueben deGroot Band (Roots Rock), 8-11pm

Ballygiblin's Restaurant (151 Bridge Street, Carleton Place, 253-7400)
Mar 1 Jazz at Bally's w/ Peter Brown & Martin Newman, 6-9pm, no cover.

Neat Coffee Shop (1715 Calabogie Rd., Burnstown, 433-3205): 8pm
Mar 2 Mark Berube \$15
Mar 10 The Claytones, \$13
Mar 23 James Keelaghan, \$25
Mar 25 Current Swell, \$17
Mar 28 SoundCheck with Mike (no cover)
Mar 31 Al Wood & the Woodsmen, \$13

The Naismith Pub (411 Ottawa St., Almonte, 256-6336): Open Celtic Jam Wed, no charge (7:30-10pm).

Foodies Fine Foods (34 Mill St., Almonte, 256-6500) dinner & show \$40, 6:30pm
Mar 2, 3 Ken Workman plays Steve Earle
Mar 30 Linda Marie Grenier & Dave Tilston tribute to Cajun Queens

Valley BBQ (10470A Hwy 7, Carleton Place, 257-1700):
Mar 17 Retro Rockers, no cover
Mar 24 Monkey Junk/Still Dangerous, 9pm, \$19 (\$16 In adv)
Mar 30 Trevor Finlay, 9pm, \$9

Carp Masonic Lodge (3704 Carp Rd., Carp): Carp Celtic Jam, \$3/\$25 for 3 mos, all levels, Mon (7-9pm).

Ashton Pub (113 Old Mill Rd., Ashton): Sundays, Open Mic Jam w/Kelly Sloan, 2-5pm
Mar 17 Irish Tunes with Kelly Sloan, 1:30-5:30pm

The Barley Mow (79 Little Bridge St., Almonte, 256-5669): Johnny Spinks Thurs (8pm), "Kitchen Party" Live entertainment Fri (9pm)
Mar 17 Johnny Spinks 3pm, Corkery Road 8pm

Café Postino (73 Mill St., Almonte): Peter Brown on piano, Thursdays, 5:30-8:30PM

Community

Lanark County Genealogical Society, Mar. 3, 1:30PM. Learn new database catalogue. Drummond Centre Community Hall, 1920 Conc 7, Perth. Free

March Melt Down, Mar. 3 from 8:30AM. Pancake Breakfast, sleigh rides, music, games, skating, chili cook-off. Brunton Community Hall, Beckwith. 257-1539

MVTM Soup for Thought Fundraiser, Mar. 3, Noon-3PM. Gourmet soup in handmade bowl you keep! \$20; \$10 ages 6-18 from Baker Bob's or MVTM; under 6 free. Textile Museum, Almonte

Seedy Sunday, Mar. 4, 9AM-3PM. Gardening talks, bring seeds for swap. Perth Legion. 284-0578, smackenzie@juno.com. Free

Seedy Sunday, Mar. 4, 10AM-3PM. Gardening talks, local lunch, bring seeds. Fellowes High School, Pembroke. Free

Valley Singles Lunch, Mar. 4, 12:30-2:30PM. Singles lunch, all welcome. Register at 256-8117. Buster's Bar and Grill, CP

Int'l Women's Day Film, Mar. 7, 6PM, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*. Film free, tea/coffee/dessert \$3. Sponsored by Interval House., Rideau Canal Museum, Smiths Falls.

MMLTC AGM, Mar. 10, 2:30PM. "Is there a balance of nature and do coyotes play a role in it?" St. Andrew's Church, Lanark. 267-4200 x3403, mmltc.ca

Sleigh Rides & More, Mar. 10-18, 10AM-2PM. Taffy, face painting & campfires. Fulton's Pancake House, Pakenham. fultons.ca

Supper/Talent Evening, Mar. 10, 6PM. Silent auction table. Donations for First Nations. St. Andrew's Church, Carleton Place. Free

Campfire Tales/Birding Walks w/Cliff Bennett, Mar. 11, 18, 25, Apr. 1, 10AM-2PM. Fulton's, Pakenham. fultons.ca

W. Carleton Garden Club Mtg/Talk, Mar. 13, 7:30PM. Spring Bulbs. Carp Memorial Hall, Carp. \$5 for non-members

Women's Business Group Mtg, Mar. 13, 7:30AM. Buster's Bar and Grill, Carleton Place. wbggroup.ca

Maple Syrup Tapping Out Party, Mar. 15, 10AM-2PM. Music, food & maple. Springdale Farms, 1699 Galbraith Rd., Clayton.

MVFN Lecture, Mar. 15, 7:30PM. "The Great River Project" by the Ottawa Riverkeeper. Almonte United Church. 257-3089. \$5 for non-MVFN members

Talk: Research Your Family Tree, Mar. 18, 2PM. With author Robert More. Brunton Community Hall, Beckwith. 257-1539

Mind-Body Healing Talk, Mar. 22, 7PM. Carp Ridge EcoWellness, 2386 Thomas Dolan Pkwy, Carp. 839-1198, \$20 at door

Almonte Lecture Series, Mar. 23, 7:30PM. Music's Time Capsule. Almonte United Church. almontelectures.ncf.ca. Free

Alpaca 101, Mar. 24, 10AM-4PM. Silent Valley Alpaca Ranch, 1120 Donaldson Rd., Ompah. 479-0307, silentvalleyalpaca.ca.

Carp Ridge Potluck & Film, Mar. 24, 3:30PM. Carp Ridge EcoWellness, 2386 Thomas Dolan Pkwy, Carp. 839-1198, Free

Great Green Party Chili Cook-Off, Mar. 24, 6:30PM. Maberly Community Hall, 172 Maberly Elphin Rd. \$20; children eat free

Spring Luncheon, Bake Sale, Bazaar, Mar. 24, 11AM-1PM. Adults \$8, kids 4-12 \$4, kids 0-3 free. Ashton United Church

Talk: Diabetes, Mar. 24, 1PM. Carp Ridge EcoWellness, 2386 Thomas Dolan Pkwy, Carp. 839-1198, ecowellness.com. Free

Meet The Occupation, Mar. 25, 2PM. An Occupy Lanark County event., Ballygiblin's, 151 Bridge Street, Carleton Place. Free

Pancake Breakfast, Mar. 25, 9AM-Noon. Union Hall, near Almonte. \$6 or \$8

Almonte Hort. Society Meeting, Mar. 26, 7:30PM. Dahlias. Cornerstone Community Church, Almonte. 257-7155

Breakfast with Soul, Mar. 30, 8-10AM. Mill Street Crepe Co., Almonte. lillywhite.ca

Live Blood Cell Analysis, Mar. 30. Call to book or drop in. Hands on Healing Ctr, 125 Bridge St., Almonte. 256-0222

Old Time Talent Night, Mar. 30, 6PM dinner, 7:30PM dancing. Civitan Club, 2144 South St., Lanark. \$12 (\$2-off coupon in Humm)

Pakenham Home Show, Mar. 30 (6-9PM), Mar. 31 (9-6), Apr. 1 (10-4). 60+ exhibits & live music. Stewart Community Ctr & Pakenham Public School. 256-1077. \$3 (12+)

Polar Bears & Penguins, Mar. 30, 7PM. Slide shows & travel tales with Bill Pratt, for Therapeutic Riding Program. Almonte United Church, therapeuticriding.ca. \$10

Breakfast with the Arts, Westport Style, Mar. 31, 7:30AM. Monthly potluck to talk about the arts. Speaker Ken Rose 8:30AM. The Wordsmith, Westport. 273-3222.

Food Sensitivity Testing, Mar. 31. Call to book or drop in. Hands on Healing Ctr, 125 Bridge St., Almonte. 256-0222

Valley Singles Lunch, Apr. 1, 12:30PM. 256-8117. East Side Mario's, Arnprior.



The Perth Citizens' Band performs their spring concert on Sunday, April 1 at the Legion Hall

An Afternoon With the Classics

Canada's oldest continuous town band, the **Perth Citizens' Band** will present "An Afternoon With the Classics" as the theme for their annual spring concert. Included will be many well-known works, from Bach, Mozart and Handel, to Bizet's *Carmen*. It will also include Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, written to commemorate Napoleon's retreat from Moscow which took place 200 years ago.

The concert will also feature a salute to the Diamond Jubilee for Queen Elizabeth II and will in-

clude several musical selections performed for her coronation in 1952. One popular tune is *Land of Hope and Glory*, from Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance*, originally composed for the Coronation of her great-grandfather, King Edward VII, in 1902.

The concert will be held at the Perth Legion Hall, 26 Beckwith Street, on Sunday, April 1 starting at 2PM. Tickets are \$5 per person and \$10 for family, available at the door, and include light refreshments. For further information, visit <perthband.ca>.

The Reeve Report

What's a Girl to Do?

It's February 20, and I've been out walking in the woods. It's -12°C and crunchy underfoot. The dogs took off in all directions, heads up, ears alert. They can feel it and so can I. It's way too early to be thinking SPRING, but there it is!

I'd love to have some extra skiing days, but that may be behind us. The snow is dry and worn out, nearly ready to rot. The nuthatches are chirping high in the trees where the grouse are eating the ironwood buds. The dogwoods are getting blood red,

the whole place shine, and I'm not ready for that yet. And besides, if I do get excited about spring cleaning, I'm really going to want to paint. It would have been better if I'd never laid eyes on that Dyson 23. Ah, but a girl can dream.

So, what to do to get over this restless compulsion to shop? First, don't succumb to the house porn magazines or the paint samples at the hardware store. Paint chips pinned to curtains is not a fashion statement. (The last time I did that, they were there for two years!) Second, don't stroll through the mall gawking in store windows decorated with pussy willows and daffodils. And whatever you do, don't casually side-step into the stores. Fatal attraction has nothing on a good window dresser when winter attire is drab.

Best you don't look at the travel brochures either — especially the ones with the beach bunnies under a palm tree.

What you *can* do is browse the seed catalogues. Not that you will be growing even half the stuff they are selling, but at least you can dream of spring. It's even better if you do this while eating a good sized bowl of ice cream drenched in maple syrup.

You can spend a couple of dollars on a pot of bulbs — daffodils and hyacinths — to breathe in that scent of spring. It's spring therapy that lasts for weeks — just about the time it'll take for the snow to melt.

You can go through your closet, get rid of the worn out things you didn't wear all winter, and find the one thing you really love and wear it with panache. Pretend it is something brand new. There must be something in there that reminds you that spring is nearly here. You can polish your shoes, and find a new scarf to jazz up your old jacket. Get out a sparkly necklace you forgot you had, and see how the sun shines off that baby.

I'm sure that as the sun gets higher in the morning, and the days lengthen, this spring angst will disappear. However, right now I really must get organized into the million projects I want to accomplish. Or else, I really must just relax into what has to be the best season of the year. I think that's the best plan. The projects will get done — or not — and I need this time to relish all the signs of spring.

by Glenda Jones

and the willows have a yellow hue. The maple buds are swelling, and I'm sure if we put in some taps, we'd have sap flowing. The squirrels are fighting off interlopers at the bird feeders.

And my thoughts are turning to — oh no! YES: shopping! I need something new, a bright Easter colour, something that won't be hidden under a jacket, a scarf, a hat and mitts. I want new shoes instead of well-worn boots. I want to hit the stores and come away with those fancy little bags with tissue paper crowding out the top and promising treasures hidden in the bottom. And I want someone else to pay for this extravagance!

What I really want is to paint something, like a room. I want new light fixtures. I want new linens and curtains. I want to update the bathroom. I want to plan a myriad of projects for the summer that will entail hiring a crew of burly guys to build it all. And I want to win the lottery right now!

Here's how desperate the situation has become. I bought a new vacuum cleaner for the Hub last week, and I got so excited about it that I test drove it through the whole house before I delivered it. I was ecstatic — the efficiency of the machine, the sleek design, and all those features any cleaner would cherish. I actually emailed people to say how much fun I'd had cleaning the house. That's pretty sad, don't you agree?

The trouble with having tried a machine like that is that my old one pales in comparison. Furthermore, I now have to clean windows to make

The Millstone

An intelligent and informed source of news for Mississippi Mills, Almonte, Pakenham, Ramsay and Carleton Place

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Let Your Voice Be Heard Take Part in a Survey of Rural Ontario

Your voice is important to rural Ontario! This truth is the basis for the participant-driven survey distributed to over 10,000 rural residents in Ontario. The Rural Voices Network (RVN) has launched the "Let Your Voice Be Heard" survey to examine what enables rural citizens to participate in the common life of their community, and to identify barriers to rural civic engagement.

This survey was developed through dialogue with over 140 rural participants in the seven RVN public forums that took place across Ontario from November 2011 to January 2012. The survey is available online at <ruralvoicesnetwork.ca>. A hard-copy version will be mailed out within a week, across the province, through Women's Institute (WI) branches. You can search for a local WI near you at <fwio.on.ca> or, to receive a paper copy of the survey, contact the FWIO provincial office at 519-836-3078 or <info@ruralvoicesnetwork.ca>.

The online survey will be available until March 16, and all hard-copy surveys must be received at the FWIO office no later than March 23. All participants have a chance to win prizes such

as a digital camera, Kobo readers, and gift cards from Shoppers Drug Mart and Tim Hortons (no purchase necessary).

"Rural community members are the grassroots of rural Ontario. Their voice, knowledge and experiences are the real testimony in trying to understand how to boost rural civic engagement. The importance of factoring in the rural voice, and grassroots understanding to the issues and needs of rural citizens, is key to developing collaborative solutions," says Lynn Ruigrok, Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario (FWIO) executive director.

The RVN project report and recommendations that emerge from the survey will enhance the work of rural volunteer organizations and represent the voices of rural citizens. The data collected from the survey will be key influences in a research and civic engagement report of rural communities across Ontario. The final report and community bulletins/posters will be released at the end of June 2012.

The Rural Voices Network is driven by the mandate to give rural citizens a space to have their voices heard, and to collaborate with non-profit organizations and leaders in all levels of governance.

Maple & March Break

Maple Run Studio Tour

The first signs of spring are beginning to appear as the snow recedes, the birds return, and the sap begins to run in Lanark maple trees. This also marks the time for the Maple Run Studio Tour, whose participants have been busy all winter creating artwork and handcrafted items. Take a scenic drive to and around historic Pakenham on Saturday, March 24, or Sunday the 25th to indulge in sweet maple products and meet local craftspeople and fine artists. This popular self-guided studio tour runs from 10AM to 5PM each day.

by Miss Cellaneous

Stops include Fulton's Pancake House and Sugar Bush, and studios featuring glass blowing demonstrations, wood working with exotic and native woods, artistic photography, jewellery in diverse



Find blown glass works by Chris Van Zanten on this year's Maple Run Studio Tour, March 24 & 25

creations, functional and decorative pottery, intricate miniature quilting, woven garments in new spring colours and fibres, handmade papers and journal books, and paintings in oil, acrylic and watercolour. You will also find natural bath and beauty products, and many more one-of-a-kind pieces. You will find artwork and crafts for yourself, your home, your garden or for gifts. Forgo the big box stores and come observe local artists in their natural habitat! Some are in their own studios, while others are gathered in groups for your convenience, in and around the quaint village of Pakenham. There is no need to pack a lunch — you can enjoy snacks or a light lunch at several stops along your journey — just check the tour map for information.

Maps and detailed descriptions can be picked up at Fulton's Sugar Bush, any tour stop along the way (look for the green maple leaf sign), Pakenham General Store, and <maplerun.on.ca>. And why not join them on Facebook for artist updates.

March Break: Pottery & Wearable Art

The **Almonte Potters Guild** and the **Mississippi Valley Textile Museum** have teamed up to offer local children, ages 8 to 12, a full week of creativity. The camp will take place during the week of March 12 to 16. The mornings will be spent at the Potters' Guild, playing and working with clay. A variety of projects will give children the opportunity to make several finished pieces to take home.

After lunch at the Potters' Guild, volunteers from the Textile Museum will bring the children on a guided walk through the streets and parks of Almonte, exploring and learning about the town's history, and ultimately ending up at the museum.

Afternoons will be spent learning skills like sewing, knitting and weaving while creating wearable textile art. Each day will feature a unique project that the children will be able to wear home.

The cost for this jam-packed week is \$250 per child — all materials are included. The camp will start at 9AM and end at 4PM.

Spaces are limited, so call or email today to register! Contact the museum at <info@mvtm.ca> or 256-3754 x7, or the Potters' Guild at 256-5556.

Fantasy Art Day Camp

Children aged 7 to 12 are invited for a half day, full day, or the entire week of March Break for a combination of creative art projects based on fantasy landscapes and creatures. Media will range from paint and papier maché to music and drama.

This day camp is being held at the Mississippi School for the Arts, 150 Mill Street in Carleton Place, from March 12 to 16. Instructors are Arts Carleton Place members, all proficient in a variety of media — sculpture, painting, music, drama, creative writing and more. The classes are geared to stimulate the student's creativity and imagination.

See <bamilnestudio.com/Classes> for schedule and registration information. Before and after care is available.

PEI "Letters" at MVTM

The Mississippi Valley Textile Museum presents a new exhibition, entitled *Letters*, by Nancy Cole. Nancy is a textile artist based in Summerside, Prince Edward Island. Her contemporary practice is based on traditional quilting skills, which she uses to produce concept-based textile art with a strong narrative component. As she puts it, "Through my own language of abstraction, I tell stories. Stories about foreign adoption, synchronicity, Canadian cultural identity, etc."

Ms Cole makes all of her pieces out of multiple layers of silk, often heavily frayed, with each layer contributing to the storytelling. A recent series of semi-transparent and textured panels is entitled "Sorrowful Letters". Inspired by Henryk Gorecki's third symphony, she's incorporated diaries and letters of three Island women from the mid-20th century — a period that Cole calls "a time rife with fear of world annihilation."

Letters runs until Saturday, April 14. The Textile Museum is located at 3 Rosamond Street East in Almonte. It is open year-round from Tuesday to Saturday, 10AM to 4PM. For more details about this event, please contact the curator, Michael Rikley-Lancaster, at 256-3754x7 or <curator@mvtm.ca>.



A detail from Nancy Cole's 'Letters' is shown above

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A Really Good Trip...

When people find out that I just came back from a band tour with 106 high school students, spending thirty-three hours on the bus for each leg of the journey, their first reaction is that I must be crazy. However, I've got to admit that our annual concert band tour is my favourite time of the year. There is nothing quite like "hitting the road" and loading up the bus, on the way to another adventure.

by Tony Stuart

This year, our Senior Concert Band and Grade 9 Band went to Disney World in Florida. The Senior Band sent an audition tape to the folks at Disney in April of last year, and we were invited to come down and perform. On February 10, the Senior Band performed a wonderful concert on the main stage at Downtown Disney.

Getting 106 students to Florida is no small task, and it was quite the journey. The first thing that needs to be taken care of is the fundraising. When I met with parents, one of the things I stressed was that we were going to make this trip affordable, and that meant a lot of fundraising. Boy, did we ever do a lot of fundraising! In a period of eight months, we managed to raise \$37,000. I feel like a career as a professional fundraiser awaits me once I retire from teaching. We had several community groups who made contributions, and I would like to publicly thank Neilcorp Homes, The Carleton Place and District Memorial Hospital Foundation, and the Town Singers of Carleton Place for their generous support. Of course, it goes without saying that we are also

grateful to everyone who supported our fundraising efforts in any way.

For me, what makes the annual band tour such a worthwhile experience is that it provides students with an opportunity to experience world-class performances. In the past few years, our students have seen performances by the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, the Boston Symphony, and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. At Disney, they had the opportunity to work with professional studio musicians. In an era where everything feels like it is being "dumbed down", it is wonderful for students to have these opportunities.

I also enjoy having the chance to be on tour with my bands outside of a school setting. Over the course of a five- or six-day tour, the members of the band have an opportunity to learn more about each other, and this closeness has a positive impact on future rehearsals and performances. It is amazing to see how much energy there is in the room at the first rehearsal once we are back home. In a large ensemble like a concert band, it is entirely possible that the first time you speak one-on-one with certain members of the band is during the tour.

One thing that I'm very proud of is the behaviour of our students during band tours. In my opinion, because they work so hard to prepare for the tour, with both rehearsing and fundraising, it takes on much more significance than a regular trip. They really buy into the whole team concept, which is an important life skill.

On another note, there was a recent article in the Ottawa Citizen, in which one of the Ottawa school boards was asking for input from the public on ways to reinvigorate their arts programs.

They mentioned how important the arts are for developing well-rounded students and citizens. It struck me as somewhat ironic that these same school boards spent the last twenty-five years cutting back on their programs, because they were viewed as "frills". However, I don't think it is too late to reverse the damage, and they are finally acknowledging what many of us already know. The best way to develop successful programs is to have extensive community involvement. In towns like Carleton Place or Almonte, this is some-



Music teacher Tony Stuart (holding *theHummm*) just returned from a trip to Disney World with 106 high school music students. Believe it or not, this article is about why band trips are awesome.

what easier, but it can also happen in larger centres like Ottawa. I am always delighted by the amount of community support that our band program receives.

In a few short months, it will be spring concert season at your local schools. If you are able, take the opportunity to attend a performance. You'll be glad that you did, and students always appreciate being able to perform in front of an appreciative audience. You'll be doing your part to help make sure that music matters.

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



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Jeremy Fisher and Jim Bryson at MERA

Two of Canada's folk/pop troubadours make a special appearance in McDonald's Corners on March 10, as a stop on their tour of Ontario. Jeremy Fisher and Jim Bryson will perform at the MERA Schoolhouse in what promises to be an exciting and engaging mix of great songwriting and virtuoso playing.

Jim Bryson is a Canadian singer-songwriter who was a founding member of the band Punch-buggy. He moved to a musical life under his own name with the release of his debut album, *The Occasionals*, in 2000.

A member of country singer Kathleen Edwards' band, Bryson has also toured and recorded with many other artists, including Howe Gelb, Lynn Miles, Sarah Harmer, The Weakerthans, and The Tragically Hip. He has toured Canada and the UK extensively, played the South by Southwest festival, and his music has been in rotation on CBC Radio 3. He is even the subject of Kathleen Edwards' song *I Make the Dough, You Get the Glory*, which appears on her album *Asking for Flowers*.

Bryson recorded with the Weakerthans for his album *The Falcon Lake Incident*, which was released in October 2010. He also produced Tanya Davis' 2010 album *Clocks and Hearts Keep Going*.

Jeremy Fisher first broke onto the scene a decade ago, and since then has been on a steady upward trajectory. His newest CD, *Flood*, is the culmination of a whirlwind writing session during which he cut over forty demos with the help of a drum machine. Although most of these rhythm tracks were later replaced with real drums, the electronic percussion helped to form the backbone of the album's upbeat, punchy sound. "To build dynamics," explains Fisher, "we mixed in mandolins, tenor guitars, open-tuned 12-strings, piano, timpani, and a huge concert bass drum — all acoustic sounds piled on top of each other to create a sort of symphony that could swell in and out of the rhythm section."

You can hear this grandiose sound on the track *Shine a Little Light*, which uses a funeral as the inspiration for its life-affirming sing-along refrain. *Come Fly Away*, the first single, is similarly joyous, with its breezy ukulele strumming, handclaps and vibrant chorus harmonies. The songs were written shortly after Fisher moved to Montreal, and the singer says that his new city helped to inspire the album's energetic style.



Jeremy Fisher (above) joins Jim Bryson for a show at MERA on March 10

The majority of the instruments were laid down by the songwriter himself, along with producer Hawksley Workman. This marks the second time that Fisher has collaborated with Workman, and the singer acknowledges that the producer had a major impact on the album's sound. "The thing I love about working with Hawksley is that it makes me not feel like a solo artist," he says. "I have sort of a big brother relationship with him. I want to impress him because he's such a virtuosic player. He can play everything better than I can. I'm competitive enough that it doesn't kill my confidence — it makes me actually want to step up and do better."

You may have already seen Fisher on YouTube, in his homemade music video for the hit *Cigarette*, which has been viewed more than two million times.

In recent years, the ever-restless Fisher has undertaken yet more diverse projects: he started his own animated web series — *For Real with Jeremy Fisher* — and has created music videos for artists like Xavier Rudd, Hannah Georgas and Hawksley Workman. He also founded The Malahat Revue — an ensemble that includes fellow Canadian pop masters Said the Whale, Hannah Georgas and Aidan Knight — that toured BC on bicycle over summer 2010.

Jeremy Fisher and Jim Bryson will appear as part of the **Music At MERA** series at the MERA Schoolhouse in McDonald's Corners. Tickets are \$20 at the door. For information, or to reserve tickets, phone 268-2376 or email <shakey acres@hotmail.com>.

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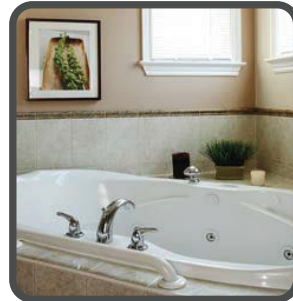
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