

the Hummm

free

Arts,
Entertainment
& Ideas



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April Ales (and Brewery Tales)

Art is awesome and maple is marvelous, but I'm happy to report that the Ottawa Valley is also home to a growing number of very fine local breweries. If such av-ale-ability entices you to the area, just give me a call!

Pat's Picks
for April:

Patrick Kelly
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

- Ashton Brewing Company's **Amber Ale** <ashtonbrewingcompany.com>
- Cartwright Springs Brewery's **Pakenham Bitter** <csbeer.ca>
- Crooked Mile's **Highland Hillwalker Scottish Export** <crookedmile.ca>
- Weatherhead Brewery's **Pilot IPA** <weatherheadbrewco.com>
- Stalwart Brewing Co.'s **Thriller Chocolate Porter** <stalwartbrewing.ca>

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theHum is for the Birds!

Just wanted to let you know that we are getting birdhouse builders way outside our immediate area and they all say: "I saw it in the Humm". You are helping us out a lot and it is wonderful to have theHumm to get the word out over a large area about events and services. Thank you both for all you do for the community.

— Barb Carroll is one of the organizers of this year's Birdhouse Bonanza fundraiser for the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust

April is Parkinson's Awareness Month — Why You Should Care

Our health care system is experiencing significant pressures due to chronic under-funding, an aging population and, of course, Covid. Unless there are major changes, it will likely only get worse.

Neurological diseases are now the leading cause of disability in the world, and the unprecedented increase in the number of people with Parkinson's Disease (PD) surpasses even those diagnosed with Alzheimer's. And PD is under-diagnosed.

A study published in 2021 in the journal *Frontiers of Public Health* compared statistics from 240 countries. It reported that, because of increasing prevalence and prolonged life expectancy, costs associated with having a diagnosis of PD will increase at an unprecedented rate (and Canada and the United States are among the countries at the top of the list.) The study concluded that current approaches were not going to help contain costs. It recommended the implementation of strategies promoting more holistic care and promotion of healthy lifestyles. This would mean a multi-disciplinary approach to Parkinson's, rare in this country and yet recognized as the most effective.

That model of providing health care has long been promoted by Community Health Centres in Ontario. For five years, Rideau Community Health Services (RCHS), a Community Health Centre serving Lanark Leeds and Grenville, has been actively planning and advocating for the development of the Smiths Falls Health and Community Hub. RCHS is clear that this hub would not only result in better health outcomes but would also improve service delivery. It would be an integrated space, approximately 30,000 to 40,000 square feet, not only bringing together health, community and social agencies but also housing recreational space, a community garden and community kitchen. Currently, the project is awaiting funding approval for a planning grant from the Ontario government. A few weeks ago, the Smiths Falls Town Council Committee of the Whole unanimously supported moving forward with exploring the availability of municipal land for such a project.

As an advocate and a person with Parkinson's, I look forward to the day when there is an integrated model of care for people with Parkinson's, saving health dollars and improving quality of life.

— Pat Evans is a Parkinson's Advocate from Portland, Ontario



"On July 13, 2019, Keith & Barb Sheldrick (from Almonte) were enjoying the scenery at the Grand Riviera Princess Resort just outside Cancun, Mexico where we attended our nephew's beautiful beach wedding. But we still always have time to read theHumm no matter where we are."



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

Submissions

By email or on disk.

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Thumm's up this month to:

All of the wonderful people who volunteered to help package up donated seeds for dissemination (see what I did there?) through the **Mississippi Mills Public Library's Seed Library**. What a wonderful gift to your community!

Thank You, Humm Patrons!

Congratulations to this month's winner of our Humm Patron Red Carpet draw! **Wendy Whitaker** won tickets to the event of her choice listed on the Tickets Please website <ticketsplease.ca>, which now includes Puppets Up pre-festival events and day-passes, Music at MERA concerts, *Shirley Valentine* at Studio Theatre Perth, Rural Root's *Drinking Habits*, three awesome tribute shows (Bootleg Creedence, Fleetwood Mac Mania and Queen Flash), and two Folkus concerts — with more events to be added soon.

If you like what we do, please consider supporting us! If you're able to contribute the price of a local latté or microbrewed beer each month, visit <thehummm.com> for links to our patronage campaign. Patrons often receive early notice about tickets to fantastic area events, among other perks. Other ways to help out include subscribing to our weekly "Hummail" newsletter (find a link on our website), and telling our advertisers you saw their ad in theHumm. Thanks for *your* support!



Shirley Valentine
by Studio Theatre Perth
March 31–April 10



Bootleg Creedence
at Farrell Hall in Perth
April 2



Puppets Up
Saturday Series Shows
Apr. 2, 9 & 23



Drinking Habits
by Rural Root Theatre Company
April 3–9



Fleetwood Mac Mania
at Farrell Hall in Perth
April 23



Folkus Concert Series
at The Almonte Old Town Hall
Next concert: Ian Sherwood & Evangeline Gentle, Apr. 30



Concert for Ukraine
at the Almonte Old Town Hall
May 1



Sherlock Holmes & The Hound of the Basketballs
May 12–14



Martyn Joseph
at MERA Schoolhouse
May 13



Queen Flash
at Farrell Hall in Perth
May 14



Countries Shaped Like Stars
at St. Paul's, Almonte
May 14



Puppets Up
Early Bird Tickets
August 12–14

TICKETS ON SALE NOW AT: **TICKETSPLEASE.CA**



Dawn Walker — There's a Pattern Here

The ability to identify patterns is an essential ingredient of human intelligence and development. It is a foundational component of mathematics, and more recently an essential underpinning of artificial intelligence. For we humans, it can also be fun and entertaining. For Almonte artist Dawn Walker, her talent for creating visual patterns on surfaces has become her passion.

by Sally Hansen

Anyone who has wandered around a fabric store is intimately familiar with the importance of surface pattern design (SPD). Patterns bring life and appeal to the surfaces with which we clothe ourselves and our furniture and our tables and our notebooks and our Kleenex boxes. Kids' pajamas are a happy example of the emotional impact patterns deliver. Walker's patterns deliver a wide range of emotional reactions. Even when spring is finally springing, her happy, vividly hued tea towels burst upon your Canadian-winter-colour-deprived senses like a bouquet of fresh flowers. Throw pillows brighten up your spirits as well as your living room. She also creates decorated paper products such as calendars and note cards.

A major influence in her work is her association with fabulous clothing designer Paddy Mann, whom she describes as a mentor. In a casual encounter seven years ago, Walker mentioned that she was interested in focusing on textile design, and Mann said: "Okay — let's do it." The collaboration has been enormously productive, as Walker's patterns now are available on towels, aprons, pillow covers and other items as custom limited editions through Paddy Mann's wonderful clothing store in Pakenham. She also credits Mann with making invaluable contributions to her confidence and her motivation. As a busy mother of two young children, and especially during the past two difficult Covid years, the support and encouragement she receives from fellow artists remains invaluable.

Some of us always know what we want to "be", but for others, it takes some living to find our calling. Many visual artists describe the moment they identified their medium as the moment that changed their life. And it is always a change for the better. Dawn Walker grew up near Westport along a meandering stream that joined the Tay River. She remembers spending most of her youth in her room drawing or outdoors exploring the rivers, lakes and

forests around her. She was shy and spent her time writing and illustrating stories. She wanted to learn French, so she spent a year at Bishop's University in Lennoxville, QC, in the Fine Arts program. After moving back to Ottawa she started taking classes at the Ottawa School of Art. When she worked at Wallack's she spent most of her paycheck on art supplies. Eventually she put together a portfolio and enrolled at Ryerson Polytechnic University in Toronto to study photography, film and video, where she got her B.A. and her first taste of digital work.

She followed her best friend to Tofino on Vancouver Island, where she worked in a variety of service jobs, managing B&Bs, and working for an eco-friendly bio-diesel bus transportation system. When her partner Ed Jenkins followed her out there, they decided to move to Sooke (near Victoria) where she started doing bookkeeping and migrated to using



3D software to do residential design. Ed, meanwhile, was pursuing his landscaping interests, and in 2007 they decided to return to his hometown of Almonte, buy a house, and raise a family.

An important milestone on the road to discovering her passion was reading *The Artist's Way*. Dawn had always kept a sketchbook, but following Julia Cameron's "techniques to open up opportunities for self-growth and self-discovery" set her on the path to becoming a surface pattern designer. She had been working at the Almonte Print Shop doing graphic design and had done a brochure for the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum where she incorporated



pattern into the design. It was through this project that she came to realize that creating patterns was her happy place. The Internet proved to be a wonderful source of both instruction and inspiration. Besides online classes, she began following other surface designers like Toronto-based Elizabeth Olwen, and dove right into the world of SPD.

By 2010 she was entering competitions and selling at farmers' markets and craft shows. She bought a letterpress and started creating stationery and note cards and other paper products.

Starting her family in 2013 both hindered and accelerated her career as an artist. While her daughter and son were pre-school age, and again during the past two years, childcare responsibilities were enormous. On the other hand, it precipitated her collaboration with fellow Almonte artists in the establishment of Carriageway Studio, which was a constant source of motivation and encouragement. Finally, in her own words, "Having kids got me laser focused; I don't have any time to waste." She now shares a beautiful studio with Sarah Jaynes at 46 Mill Street in Almonte.

Last year Dawn entered nine designs in a competition to appear in the 4th edition (Spring 2021) of the *UPPERCASE #49 Surface Pattern Design Guide* published by the popular design publication *UPPERCASE* based in Calgary. She was thrilled to have three of her designs published among only one hundred selected from submissions by 850 designers, each of whom submitted between six and nine patterns, for a minimum of well over 5,000 designs. The curator of the competition then chose Dawn's design as her example of how: "...successful submissions usually had a confident use of colour... the artist had a sophisticated interpretation of colour... some sort of personality presented in that colour." This artist certainly does.

The Curator also wrote: "Pattern designers engage in an art fundamentally rooted in optimism: that there will always be more — more things of beauty, more objects of utility, more time and, always, more beauty." Please see the back of Dawn Walker's Artist Trading Card for coordinates to view her vivacious, beautiful and intriguing patterns, and to purchase handmade stationery and other offerings. And check out uppercasemagazine.com/products/uppercase-49-single-copy; particularly minute 4 of the video at the bottom of the page.

Gratuitous footnote: The generous gentleman who regularly critiques my draft articles and is an inveterate punster is perplexed as to why Surface Pattern Design does not rebrand itself as Flattery since it is two-dimensional by definition. Also, flattery is the sincerest form of imitation...



MICHAEL PITTMAN

The Other Islands

March 30 - May 6, 2022

Vernissage/Meet the Artist: Saturday April 9, 2pm-4pm



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

WHO Dawn Walker
WHAT Surface pattern designer and illustrator/multi-disciplinary designer
WHERE Studio at 46 Mill Street, Almonte, <dawn@dawnwalker.ca>, <dawnwalker.ca>, <facebook.com/DawnWalkerDesign>
WHEN By appointment
WHY "I create because I am compelled to — to learn, to explore, to wonder, to process, to get lost, to make sense of, to connect, and to be fully me."



What's the Commotions?

A Spring Kick-off Concert for the 2022 Stewart Park Festival!

The Downtown Heritage Perth BIA and Stewart Park Festival will present What's the Commotions? Spring Kick-off Concert, taking place on the Perth Brewery Patio at the Crystal Palace on April 22, and featuring The Commotions and Beatles cover band Beatlejuice.

The event features a night of drinks and dancing, with doors opening at 6:45PM and music starting at 7:30PM. Grab a bite on-site from the Law & Orders food truck and a cold beverage from Perth Brewery, Top Shelf distillery or Pelee Island Winery. Enjoy yourself inside the Crystal Palace or outside on the Perth Brewery Patio along the Tay basin, keeping warm with outside firepits.

Who are The Commotions? Take a blazing horn section, throw down some bombastic drums, pepper in piano and guitar, then stir in vocals shifting from sweet to soulful to sultry quicker than you can hop onto the dance floor. And you will hop onto the dance floor, because that's a recipe for groove-making. It's ingredients for crowd-shaking. It sizzles. It pops. It

jumps. It jives. It's The Commotions and the taste is soulicious!

Putting the motion in The Commotions are eleven band members including two lead singers and a wild five-piece horn section with a mighty dose of trumpets and sax. This group is ready to command crowds with brassy beats and smooth ballad treats, all about bringing back the spirit of those super soul sounds of the '70s and the Motown rhythms that once had people dancing in the streets.

Tickets are \$15 each and available for purchase online in advance, or at the door.

This fundraising concert is in support of the 2022 Stewart Park Festival and is brought to you by sponsors TD Bank Group, Perth Brewery, and Top Shelf Distillers.

The Stewart Park Festival is a three day, by-donation music festival taking place from July 15 to 17, and is a proud committee of the Downtown Heritage Perth BIA. For more information, please visit <stewartparkfestival.com>.

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Joey Graff and *The Hound of the Basketballs...*

Graff Directs Puppeteering Icons in Bawdy Baskervilles Take-Off

Susan Macaulay interviews Joey Graff, Director of *Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Basketballs*, a too-funny-to-miss fundraiser for Puppets Up! 2022.

Susan Macaulay: Tell me a little bit about yourself.

Joey Graff: Let's see. I was raised in Almonte, I'm 31 years old and I am the director of the upcoming puppet show *Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Basketballs*, which is playing at the Almonte Old Town Hall from May 12–15.

Good work plugging the show, Joey.

Thanks.

Your CV massively impressed me. You have such a variety of skills and talents, including playing the fiddle. Can you tell me more about that?

Sure. I've been playing violin and fiddle for twenty-six or twenty seven years. The Ottawa Valley has a deep-rooted tradition of fiddling and I was fortunate to learn from some incredible local fiddlers. People such as Danny O'Connell and Alexis MacIsaac, who toured with Riverdance as their resident fiddler and is one of the best musicians I've ever worked with.

But you decided not to pursue fiddling and music. You became an actor, puppeteer and director instead. How did that happen?

My experience with puppetry began, as did that of many folks here in Almonte and across Canada, with Noreen Young's CBC TV children's series *Under the Umbrella Tree*. I knew all the characters — Gloria Gopher, Iggy Iguana and Jacob Blue Jay. I cannot emphasize enough how much of an influence Noreen had on me as a child, starting with productions such as *Under the Umbrella Tree* and *The Noddy Shop*.

I made my first puppet — a leprechaun — in one of Noreen's workshops. I even worked on a production with Noreen. I remember her teaching us how to do the casting for latex puppets, which is something she pioneered.

All of that led to an interest in puppetry in high school. My teacher, Ms Sheffield, asked me if I would make the puppets if she got the rights to *Little Shop of Horrors*. I laughed and said sure. You can guess what happened. Months later she came back to me and said "I got the rights, now you have to make the puppets." So I did. I think she still has them.

But it was really Noreen and her instruction, benevolence and wisdom in the arts that got me into puppetry in the first place. One of my fondest memories is of going to her house where there's a giant wall of puppets. It was absolutely magical. Later, I took drama at Queens University where I directed a few puppet shows and ended up focusing strictly on puppets in my final year. And puppetry led to me getting a break into the arts community in Toronto. I was there visiting friends, and someone who had heard I was in town invited me to audition for a show, and I got the part and just stayed on in Toronto. So yes, it's thanks to puppetry that my career has evolved the way it has. It's been foundational to what I understand and enjoy about theatre.

And now, in this production, you're directing Noreen Young, your former teacher Jenny Sheffield, and seven other accomplished puppeteers. What's that like?

Honestly? I have to pinch myself now and again to make sure it's actually happening. I'm working with people I looked up to when I was a kid: Noreen Young, Stephen Brathwaite, Bob Stutt, Allan Martin and others. They were part of Puppets Up! for years, some of them as balcony puppeteers, which meant I physically looked up to them as well!

Working with them now is kind of surreal. I have to remind myself that I should call Ms Sheffield Jenny and not Ms Sheffield. It took me a while to get used to that. It's been so humbling to have the opportunity



Joey Graff (above, the one who isn't made of latex) poses with his "cast" of puppets created by Noreen Young and costumed by Ingrid Hamster. The adult-oriented show runs from May 12–15.

to direct them and just to get to work with them in general because their influence and abilities are staggering. They really are a brilliant group of artists. I'm still learning from them.

It must be challenging directing these puppeteering stars, people who have been teachers and mentors to you in the past. How does it feel?

Initially, I felt really awkward walking into the rehearsal room. In my head I would be saying "Oh my goodness I'm here to direct Noreen Young. How the heck do I do that?" But then I reminded myself that directing is a role too and I know how to play that role. I firmly believe I am not there to tell people what to do. Rather, I am there to support the actors. That's what puppeteers are — actors. It's my job to support them in bringing the show to life.

I help choreograph what happens on the set. I make suggestions. They suggest changes and improvements. It's collaborative. The fact that they are all fabulously talented and have years of experience makes it fun.

One final question: why should people come to see *Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Basketballs*?

That's easy. The script (by Allan Martin) is wickedly funny. Lots of twists, turns, laughs and innuendo. And of course the puppeteers are immensely entertaining. The costuming by Ingrid Hamster is stunning. The set is imaginative. Everyone associated with the production is committed to making the show an unforgettable experience for audiences. It's going to be great. I should mention that it's definitely an adult show. Not for children.

But there's something else that's very important. This show is a fundraiser for Puppets Up! 2022, which is returning to Almonte from August 12–14 this year. It's one of the best festivals I've ever been to. The fact that it's coming back, even if only for this year, is so uplifting. Seeing the show and supporting Puppets Up! at the same time is an opportunity not to be missed


***Sherlock Holmes and the Hound of the Basketballs* will be presented at the Almonte Old Town Hall from May 12–14 at 7:30PM and on May 15 at 2PM. Early bird tickets are available for \$25 each until April 24 (after which late-bird tickets will be available for \$30 each) from Tickets Please — call 485-6434 or visit <ticketsplease.ca>.**



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Arts Carleton Place is On the Move!

2022 Art Show at the Carleton Place Arena

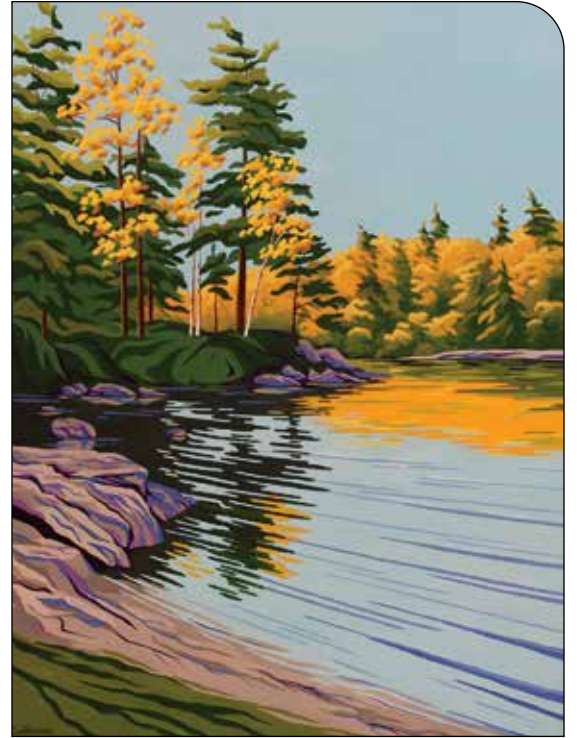
On April 30 and May 1, forty-five local artists have been juried and will be participating in Arts Carleton Place's 2022 Fine Art Show and Sale, taking place from 10AM to 4:30PM each day at the newly renovated Carleton Place Arena at 75 Neelin Street. Admission is free.

We are all looking for something beautiful right now in a fractured world of high gas prices and conflict — and what provides more of a feast for the soul than the creativity and talent of the Arts CP exhibiting artists? Allow their art to sing to the senses and explore the brilliance of the stunning watercolours, pottery, jewellery and more. Meet the artists and learn from them by delving deep into their processes, from the seed of inspiration to the finished product.

The Fine Arts Show and Sale is the biggest of its kind in the Valley, and this year will be at the new venue of the Carleton Place Arena, where parking is free. It is a family-oriented event, with an educational and enriching experience for all visitors.

A portion of the sales goes directly into the community. Arts Carleton Place remains devoted to supporting the arts locally by providing bursaries for students for their post-secondary studies and partnering with other local groups committed to nurturing all the arts in our region.

This year's show also features an exhibition of work by the students of the Core Youth Programs, a group providing free activities for youth in the community since 1995. Arts CP works in partnership with Core Youth to provide arts-related programming. *Faces Magazine's* "Favourite Theatre Group" — the Mississippi Mudds — will also be present at the show with an information table. About to enter their Golden



This year's Arts Carleton Place show & sale takes place on April 30 and May 1, and features works by Jaynie Coulterman (above), Denise Guillemette (below), and many others

Anniversary season, Carleton Place's amazing community theatre group will share memories from their first 50 years and talk about what's to come.

Come and discover for yourself the rich and diverse talents of local artists, and leave feeling appreciative of the beauty they create.



WOW that was a long one!

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Countries Shaped Like Stars

Family-Friendly Show Plays Almonte and the Ottawa Children's Festival

The story of Gwendolyn Magnificent and Bartholomew Spectacular starts with demanding dragon fruits and ends with heartache whispered into the ears of birds and constellations. With spoons, water glasses, whirly-winds and a mandolin, the performers create the sounds and images of a landscape forever altered by two people coming together, and then coming apart.

Part storytelling, part concert, this is a tale of love heard best through a tin-can telephone.

When *Countries Shaped Like Stars* was first made in 2009, co-creators Emily Pearlman (now of Almonte) and Nick Di Gaetano (now of Smiths Falls) wanted to make theatre that felt like a party. They wanted to be together in a room with people, where the audience was integral to the telling of the story. The type of room didn't matter, as long as there were people in it. They performed in a living room and a cat walked across the stage mid-performance. They performed in a bar with sticky floors and the guy who was there to watch football ended up crying. They performed in a different living room and accidentally told a rude joke to a former governor general. As long as the audience was different, it kept things interesting to perform.

Initially the co-creators didn't think they were creating a show for families (it is a comic-tragedy after all), but after their first

run, people started coming back and bringing their kids. "It makes adults feel like they are kids, and kids feel like they are privy to something adult," says Di Gaetano. Playing to intergenerational audiences allows the metaphors to hit people where they are at, and opened up a different touring circuit for the show. They have since performed to sell-out intergenerational crowds at festivals and as part of theatre seasons from Yukon to Albuquerque.

Flash forwards to two years of the "great pause." When the Ottawa Children's Festival asked if the duo wanted to get the show back on its feet, they realized that a piece that celebrates people coming together, and explores how we hold onto moments of togetherness that are potentially fleeting, is a show about this moment in time. "I'm excited about theatre audiences right now" says Di Gaetano. "One of my favorite shows ever was in Haines Junction, Yukon. This is a village of 600 people. It was the wildest show we had ever done. We have this section where we ask if anyone wants to tell a joke, and literally half the audience wanted to. We had to cut it off because the show was running too long. A dad in the audience came up to us afterwards to apologize — 'Whew! Sorry! It seems we needed that, it's been a looooooong winter!' Two years of being apart feels like the longest winter humans have faced, maybe ever, so may the jokes be plentiful.



Emily Pearlman in a scene from *Countries Shaped Like Stars*. Emily and her theatrical partner Nicolas Di Gaetano will present this family-friendly show in Almonte on May 14 as a fundraiser for the Puppets Up! International Puppet Festival.

Performing the show in Almonte as a fundraiser for Puppets Up felt like a win-win. "Puppets Up was one of the major reasons I moved to Almonte," explains Pearlman. "It felt like evidence that this was a community that supported the arts, and the volunteer passion that is going into bringing that festival back shows that certainly is the case."

Countries Shaped Like Stars will be presented by the Centre for Creative Living in the basement of Saint Paul's Anglican

Church in Almonte, located at 70 Clyde Street, on Saturday, May 14 at 11AM and 3PM. The show runs 45 minutes. Tickets (\$12.50 plus charges) are very limited and available at Tickets Please (ticketsplease.ca or 485-6434) or at the door. For more information, please visit <playwhereyoulive.ca>.

The show is created and performed by Nicolas Di Gaetano and Emily Pearlman, directed by Patrick Gauthier, and with costumes and props by Sarah Waghorn.

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Food Insecurity and the Pandemic

In previous columns, I have referenced statistics that one Canadian household in eight experiences food insecurity. Is this a reliable estimate? Let me assure you that I did not make this up! Household food insecurity in Canada is measured by Statistics Canada using the Household Food Security Survey Module, which consists of 18 questions about

by David Hinks

food insecurity. The findings: 4.4 million out of 38 million Canadians experience some degree of food insecurity. Nearly one million of those experience severe food insecurity to the extent of missing meals or going whole days without eating.

What is the reason for food insecurity? It's pretty basic — lack of income! Over 40 per cent of food bank clients are on disability pensions and many others are the working poor. Interestingly, food insecurity drops significantly for folks 65 and over when government pensions and income supplements kick in.

Our society and our governments have been loath to respond to the plight of the food insecure by raising disability pensions, social assistance benefits or minimum wages. The response has largely been food charity ranging from food banks to soup kitchens — virtually all relying on volunteer effort and donations.

However, food banks and other forms of food charity do not reach all of the food insecure. It is estimated that only one in four rely on food charity. There are many reasons folks do not use food banks — there is the shame or stigma aspect and there are those that feel that someone else needs it more than they do.

But, bottom line, there are many folks who rely on food banks to feed their families, and there are many heroes who are volunteering their time, money and energy, many sacrificially, to make sure their neighbours do not go hungry. This led me to conversations with our food banks and other agencies in Lanark County about their Covid experience.

Interestingly, Covid was slow to have an impact and the number of clients actually dropped with the first Covid wave. This appeared to be directly attributable to the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). Demand at food banks dropped off when marginalized folk started receiving income supplements.

Covid presented many practical challenges. Activities had to be limited to those that could only be done safely, meeting Covid protocols such as maintaining proper physical distancing. Food delivery options

were expanded — for the Lanark County Food Bank, the satellite operation in Almonte was suspended in favour of delivery to the door of clients.

Ensuring an adequate volunteer base through the pandemic was another challenge. Many food bank volunteers are members of vulnerable populations and were forced to be cautious. Staff had to be re-assigned and new volunteers had to be recruited and trained.

The Table Community Food Centre in Perth experienced significant changes in the number of people making use of their programs and how they used them. Most notable was the huge increase in the community meals — which tripled, from an average 75 people at each of three sessions a week to over 230. In contrast, the number of visits to the food bank was lower in 2020 and 2021 than in 2019.

A coalition of four Lanark County Youth Centres accomplished astounding results using federal Covid relief funds. Over the period August 2020 to December 2021, 81,000 frozen meals were prepared by youth and provided to the community.

The Lanark Highlands Food Pantry has seen their clientele nearly double, leading to a doubling of their expenditures on perishable foods.

Covid had a much more devastating effect on groups such as Lanark Highlands Plan B. Formed to build an inclusive community through activities such as community dinners and food sharing, they were unable to offer much of their usual programming. The focus shifted to projects like the Good Food Box and Zoom meetings. The goal was to alleviate what they see as the new health crisis — loneliness.

Faith groups that provide regular weekly free lunches also had to curtail their programs.

On the positive side, the response of local donors in the community has been astounding, and government grants and donations have been very generous. This has allowed investment in new equipment and in garden projects, new and enhanced ways to provide service to food bank clients, and the ability to build up financial reserves.

Looking to the future requires a crystal ball; however, there are ominous signs on the horizon. The question remains as to whether financial reserves are sufficient to weather approaching storms — rampant inflation, climate disasters, war and famine, and an end to government benefit payments. Increases in the price of gasoline, housing, utilities and groceries are putting intolerable pressure on marginalized folk. The number of people requiring help from food banks is back to pre-Covid levels and is increasing. Food banks are responding as they are able — for example, the Smiths Falls Community Food Bank has recently doubled the amount of food they provide to clients.

I applaud the efforts of those who are lobbying government to increase disability pensions, to provide more affordable housing and to work towards a guaranteed annual income. This may be the only way to help the 3.3 million food insecure folks who choose not to use food banks.

However, we must not lose sight of the urgent need to ensure that our neighbours do not go to bed with empty bellies.

Humm Bits

Rural Root Presents *Drinking Habits*

Opening on April 3, Rural Root Theatre Company presents *Drinking Habits*, written by Tom Smith and directed by Cathy Dowsett.

Accusations, mistaken identities, and romances run wild in this traditional, laugh-out-loud farce. Two nuns at the Sisters of Perpetual Sewing have been secretly making wine to keep the convent's doors open, but Paul and Sally, reporters and former fiancés, are hot on their trail. They go undercover as a nun and priest, but their presence, combined with the addition of a new nun, spurs paranoia throughout the convent that spies have been sent from Rome to shut them down. Wine and secrets are inevitably spilled as everyone tries to preserve the convent and reconnect with lost loves.

The show opens at the NorthWind Wireless Fibe Community Centre in Constance Bay with a 2PM matinee on April 3, followed by 7:30PM performances on April 5–9. Tickets are available at Tickets Please (ticketsplease.ca or 485-6434). Find more details at <ruralroot.org>.

2022 P'Earth Day Parade and Celebration

On Friday, April 22, everyone is invited to gather at the bandstand behind Perth Town Hall at 6:45PM. At 7PM sharp, the P'Earth Day Parade will proceed up Gore Street to Foster Street, to Wilson Street and the Big Ben statue, and through Stewart Park. There will be a celebratory tree planting and sharing circle in celebration of Earth Day. Three locally created Parachutes for the Planet will be featured. Please contact Anita Payne at <payanita@gmail.com> for more information.

MVFN Seeks Part-Time Program Coordinator

The Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists are looking for a part-time coordinator of their Young Naturalist Program. They are inviting applications from someone who has the enthusiasm, energy and skills to coordinate a once-a-month program for children.

Some of the qualifications that such a person would need would be: a love, appreciation and knowledge of the natural world, some experience with kids, organizational and communication skills, experience working with volunteers, and some training in first aid. Also a criminal reference check would be required.

More specifically, this job entails organizing and running a nature-oriented education program for kids aged 6–11, one Saturday morning per month for nine months (four fall sessions Sept.–Dec., five winter/spring sessions Feb.–June). The program has been in operation for some years now and is well established and equipped with theme unit outlines, activity ideas and materials already available. Remuneration includes a monthly fee for each session, plus prep time and gas allowance, amounts for which are being reviewed. For more information, please contact Bob Smith at 322-3013.

Art Supply & Fabric Donations Sought for Remote Communities

Colleen Gray, a dynamic and talented local artist and founder of the Art for Aid charity, will be collecting sewing materials and art supplies for both the Sew & Sew program and Art for Aid at 50 Bennett Street, Unit 3, in Carleton Place. People can drop off their supplies between 9AM and noon on April 19, 21 and 25, and on May 4 and 12. If Colleen is able to arrange more drop off dates beyond that, she will announce them on social media.

Colleen would like to encourage everyone to carefully read the list of items that are needed, but also what they can't accept. You can find the list for Sew & Sew at <ilovefirstpeoples.ca/sewandsew>, and the list for Art for Aid at <artforaid.ca/donate-art-supplies>. People can connect with Colleen at <artforaid2013@gmail.com> if they need to schedule a drop-off time beyond the dates listed above.



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Uniting in Pakenham

A Welcoming Venue at St. Andrew's United

I recently had the pleasure of giving an Almonte Lecture on the topic of community theatre. Near the end of my talk, I lamented the lack of affordable venues for rehearsing and performing in Mississippi Mills. I guess Orpheus was paying attention, because I recently received an invitation to visit St. Andrew's United Church in Pakenham, where

by Kris Riendeau

four dynamic volunteers toured me around their beautiful and well-appointed space. Their mission is to create a place where the community can come to work, play and celebrate, and their goal is to make it so welcoming and accessible that we would all be foolish not to take them up on that offer! We emailed Rhonda Tees to get the official scoop on the space.

theHumm: Although the pandemic presented churches with many challenges, I understand that it also provided opportunities for upgrading. What new equipment and facilities have been added at St. Andrew's over the past two years?

Rhonda Tees: As a country church in a farming community, we believe in making hay while the sun shines, so we took advantage of down-time during the pandemic to make our church a more robust, welcoming space. Our amazing volunteers rallied together — again — for a renovation project that included improvements to our heating and electrical systems, a new water treatment system and fresh coats of paint.



St. Andrew's is ready to host musical, theatrical and community events!

But the pièce de resistance of their efforts is our brand new audio-visual equipment. Volunteers sourced, purchased and installed dozens of pieces of equipment and lighting, and ran and fished what felt like miles of wire and cable. We did it to create the best experiences possible for people at worship and events, our worship leaders, choir, guest speakers and visiting musicians. Everyone who comes to St. Andrew's today has a richer experience because of the new capabilities.

I understand that St. Andrew's has been used as a performance venue by the Festival of Small Halls, among others. What makes the sanctuary such a great spot for music?

The big thing is the sound in our Sanctuary. Visitors rave about the acoustics. A space that makes your voice and your music sound the best it can be is something that all musicians — professional and not so professional — love about our space. We also have some great staging areas that contribute to the smooth running of events.

It is also an aesthetically pleasing space that features eight giant arches rising from the floor to form an octagon in the centre of the domed ceiling 25 feet above the floor. To enhance people's enjoyment of performances, the floor gently slopes toward the

pulpit/stage area. In the daytime the space is flooded with light from beautiful stained-glass windows and the pews, pulpit and wainscoting are made of polished oak and ash. It's a truly lovely space.

Another key is that our volunteers are excited to see new faces in the church and do a great job of welcoming one and all to St. Andrew's.

What other types of activities would you like to see taking place at the church, and what other facilities can people rent besides the sanctuary?

Historically we've used the space for concerts, kitchen parties, community suppers, the local Community Outreach Speaker Series, club meetings for the Horticulture Society, yoga classes, community choir rehearsals, birthday parties, showers and weddings. In a nutshell, we are a place where people can celebrate all the important moments in their lives.

Moving forward, we see the spaces being used for theatre productions, music lessons and workshops — virtually anything that people need a great space for.

In addition to the Sanctuary and its adjoining Stewart Hall, we have an accessible dining hall that comfortably seats 100 people. We use this space for meetings, classes, parties and of course church suppers. We also rent the kitchen, which is equipped with an industrial dishwasher.

In addition to having a warm, welcoming and very adaptable space, you have also recently lowered the rental rates. I am personally delighted, but what was the rationale for that?

This is a seemingly simple but very important question. Declining attendance is a reality shared by Christian churches of every denomination all over the world. We want to share our beautiful space with the community. We want our building to serve not just our church members but our community members. We want to ensure that St. Andrew's is a place for the community to worship, work and play. What better way to accomplish this — when the price of everything, everywhere is going up — than to lower our rental rates? We want St. Andrew's to be the place people come to when they are celebrating the great things in their lives. We want to build some excitement and energy in the building. We think modest rental rates will help us accomplish this.

You mentioned that you have opportunities for young people to satisfy their requirements for volunteer hours. What kind of work are they doing?

Our young people always bring their enthusiastic help to church suppers and events, but we now have additional opportunities thanks to our newly installed AV system.

One of the side benefits of installing the AV system is that it created jobs that are ideal for young people who need volunteer hours. We teach them about audio, projection, broadcasting, live-streaming to YouTube, recording, video mixing and lighting. They also learn to use ProPresenter, which is a presentation and production application designed for live events. ProPresenter enables the seamless display of lyrics, slides and media — kind of like PowerPoint on steroids.

Our youth volunteers work in teams of three, running different parts of the system depending on the week. They all have an interest in technology and/or the arts, are smart, dependable and organized. They work from 10AM to 12:30PM every other Sunday. There are occasional opportunities to work special events which pays \$15/hour. We are always looking for additional young people who would like to learn cool, marketable skills while they earn their volunteer hours. If you have kids in your life who fit the bill, give me a call at 624-5593.

It's a great situation. The youth love learning about and running the equipment — and we love the youth!



Claudia Smith

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Second Time's the Charm!

By Sandy Irvin

Some of us have been waiting for this show for two years. And we're so pleased that we can finally bring Ian Sherwood and Evangeline Gentle to our stage on April 30. Once again, the Folkus Concert Series will be offering our live show at the Almonte Old Town Hall, with a streaming option for those who are more comfortable at home.

Ian Sherwood is a singer-songwriter, storyteller, and multi-multi-instrumentalist. He is charming in person and funny as heck on stage between songs. He brings a real verve and sense of fun to his stage performance, whether he's setting up saxophone loops for a traditional tune, belting out one of his original songs accompanied by his acoustic guitar, or laying down a ballad on piano. Sherwood explores human relationships, telling stories of ordinary folks, firefighters, and troublemakers. His voice is supple, veering between gravel at the low end and fine whisky — and did we mention his whistling? His most recent recording, *Bring the Light*, produced by Daniel Ledwell, is hooky, clever and versatile, reminding us what a broad net you can cast with folk music.

Here are just a few testaments to his skills: "A born storyteller and a constant creator, his music dances the line between folk and pop. His live performances thrive on intimacy. Whether it's a theatre show or large festival stage, his persona is irresistible and completely destroys fourth walls." "You know that Silk Soy Milk? The chocolate kind? That's what his voice sounds like."



On April 30, Folkus presents Ian Sherwood with special guest Evangeline Gentle

Opening for Ian Sherwood will be Evangeline Gentle, a rising star from Peterborough now based in Hamilton. Evangeline brings a clarion voice and introspective songwriting to the stage. Their self-titled LP was recorded just down the road at Jim Bryson's Fixed Hinge Studios, and has all the vocal warmth and precise sound you'd expect.

Andrea Warner of CBC Music says: "Evangeline Gentle's voice communicates an aching warmth that comes with knowing hardness and choosing softness instead. I didn't know anything about them before this self-titled debut, produced by the great Jim Bryson, and every time I listen to the record I'm blown away anew by their songwriting and the space they're carving out across multiple genres — indie pop, alt-folk, singer-songwriter — in a way that feels effortless."

Folkus shows are still held in the Almonte Old Town Hall auditorium (there's an accessible elevator if you use the side entrance). Doors open at 7:30, showtime is 8PM. Please bring a little cash if you'd like to pick up some music or a t-shirt at the merch table, or a cold beverage or cookie from our bar.

Tickets (of both the in-person and live-streaming variety) are available from Tickets Please (ticketsplease.ca or 485-6434). Please check out <folkusalmonte.com> for any last-minute updates, artist videos, and news about our final show on June 4. We look forward to seeing you!



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Local Explorer Jill Heinerth Awarded Stefansson Medal

Canadian underwater explorer and Carleton Place resident Jill Heinerth has been selected as the latest recipient of the Canadian Chapter of The Explorers Club's highest honour, the Stefansson Medal. The award honours "outstanding contributions to the cause of exploration and/or field sciences in Canada or internationally."

This year's award was given to Heinerth recognizing "lifetime contributions as a renowned cave diver, polar explorer, author, speaker, filmmaker and climate advocate dedicated to advancing scientific and geographic knowledge in extreme environments."

Only one Stefansson Medal is given out each year and it was a unanimous decision to award the 2021 Stefansson medal to Jill Heinerth. Jill is the first Explorer-in-Residence of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and is the recipient of the Governor General's Polar Medal. As a pioneer of technical rebreather diving, she has led expeditions into icebergs in Antarctica, volcanic lava tubes, and submerged caves worldwide. Jill is a Fellow of the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame, Underwater Academy of Arts and Sciences, Women Divers Hall of Fame, and the Explorers Club. Her memoir, *Into the Planet: My Life as a Cave Diver*,

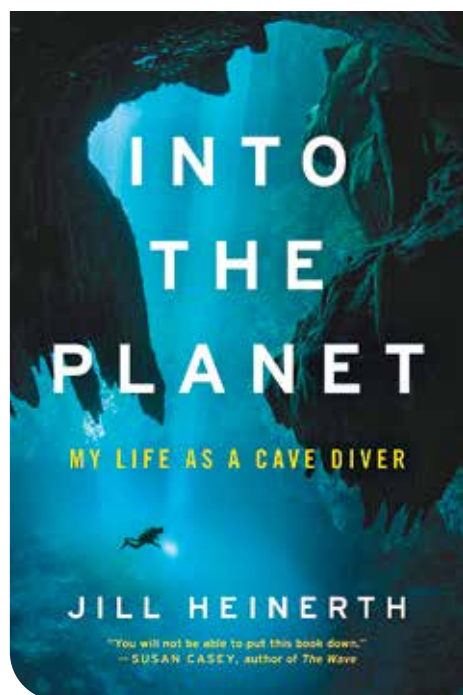


Huge congratulations to underwater explorer and Carleton Place resident Jill Heinerth!

has been lauded by the *Wall Street Journal*, *Oprah Magazine* and *The New York Times*. Her children's book, *The Aquanaut*, is a Blue-Ribbon Selection for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Jill's recent film, *Under Thin Ice*, shares important lessons about climate change and can be seen on *The Nature of Things* on CBC.

Heinerth will be recognized at the Explorer's Club Annual Dinner this spring, where she is also being celebrated as the recipient of the William Beebe Prize for exploration. The presentation of the 2020 award has been delayed for two years, but the club is looking forward to reviving their traditional Annual Dinner and Awards ceremony on April 23, 2022. Heinerth will be the fifth recipient and first woman to receive the prestigious recognition.

The Explorers Club is an international society dedicated to the advancement of field research and exploration. Since its inception in 1904, the Club has served as a meeting point and unifying force for explorers and scientists worldwide. Founded in New York City in 1904, The Explorers Club promotes the scientific exploration of land, sea, air and space by supporting research and education in the physical, natural and biological sciences. The Club's members have been responsible for an illustrious series of famous firsts: First to the North Pole, first to the South Pole, first to the summit of Mount Everest, first to the deepest point in the ocean, first to the surface of the moon — all accomplished by its members.



Editor's Note:

To find out more about Jill Heinerth, I highly recommend reading the interview she did with theHumm back when her children's book, *The Aquanaut*, was selected for inclusion in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. You can search "Heinerth" at <thehummm.com> or use this link: thehummm.com/online/article.cfm?articleid=2831

And to learn even more about this fascinating Ottawa Valley resident, you can order her memoir, *Into the Planet: My Life as a Cave Diver*, from her website at <intotheplanet.com>. It's also available from local bookstores and area libraries. As of press time I am on page 122, and finding it very difficult to put it down and get back to work!

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Ice War Diplomat Book Signing in Perth

On Saturday, April 23, from 12:30–3:30PM, author Gary J. Smith will be signing copies of his new book, *Ice War Diplomat: Hockey Meets Cold War Politics at the 1972 Summit Series*, at The Book Nook in Perth.

Ice War Diplomat outlines the intersection of hockey and history, hockey and diplomacy. It is also the personal story of a young Canadian diplomat and his wife on their first assignment who found themselves in Cold War Moscow, landing in the middle of an historic sporting event between the best hockey players of Canada and the USSR.

It's the early 1970s and a Cold War between communism and capitalism, the West and the East, is simmering. Tasked with finding common ground and building friendships between the world's two largest countries and arctic neighbours, Canadian diplomat Gary J. Smith finds himself on his first overseas assignment as the Second Secretary at the Canadian Embassy in Moscow. Trained in Russian and deployed by Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's détente policy, Smith opts for sports diplomacy, throwing off his embassy black tie dress code and donning the blue and white sweater of the "Moscow Maple Leafs" beer-league hockey team.

Armed with cases of Molson, Smith sets forth into Russian beer-league hockey. A vodka-infused encounter with the influential *Izvestia* journalist "Snegovik" (The Snowman) leads him into the murky world of Soviet hockey officialdom, the KGB play-book, and the decision that USSR "amateurs" were finally ready to play Canadian "professionals" in an eight-game Friendship Series of "the best versus the best."

On April 18, 1972 in Prague, a page-and-a-half "Letter of Agreement" finally was signed by the President of the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and the Secretary General of the USSR Ice Hockey Federation. Trusted by each side with unparalleled access to officials, coaches and players on both

teams, Smith portrays this unique and epic hockey series that has come to transcend time, becoming a symbol of the unity and clarity that sports can offer. Gary J. Smith concludes *Ice War Diplomat* with these thoughts: "Engagement and dialogue remain the foundation of diplomacy. And though diplomacy

may falter from time to time, it remains an essential element of foreign policy. Hockey has been, and can again be, part of that process with Russia."

About the Author

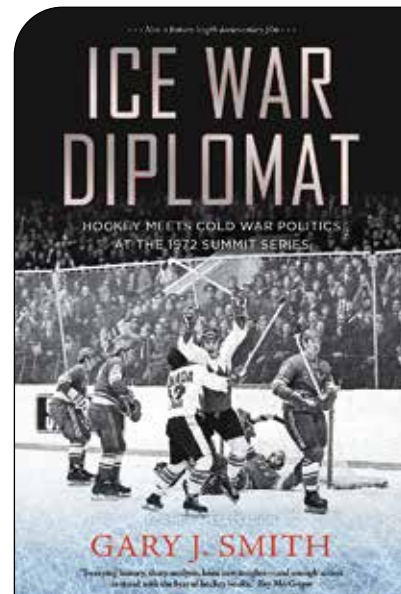
Gary J. Smith was a diplomat in the Canadian embassy in Moscow from 1971 to 1974. After Moscow, Smith was assigned to be Canada's representative to the Political Committee at NATO headquarters in Brussels where ongoing assessments were made of the political situation in the USSR and Eastern Europe. In 1981, he became the second in command at the Canadian Embassy in Israel. His assignment occurred during the highly contentious Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, as part of Israel's continuous conflict with

the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

As the Cold War was heating up in Europe, the Israel posting was cut short and Smith returned to External Affairs headquarters to take over as Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Division.

In 1983-84, Smith worked once more in proximity to Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, as Trudeau launched his International Peace Initiative to help cool the heated rhetoric coming out of Moscow and Washington and to suggest specific measures to reduce the risk of military conflict. A handful of advisors, including Smith, accompanied the Prime Minister to sixteen countries meeting among other national leaders British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, French President Francois Mitterrand, US President Ronald Reagan, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping.

Smith now resides in Perth, Ontario.



Author and former ambassador Gary J. Smith will sign his new book in Perth on April 23



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Taking the Bull by the Horns

Local Artist Recognized in International Art Competition; Opens New Gallery in Pandemic

Just as the first wave and lock-down of Covid hit, local artist Richard James Hutton received the joyful news of achieving Finalist in a world-wide wildlife art competition hosted by *International Artist* magazine. Richard, in his pleasant and gentle Scottish lilt, animatedly explains: "Because of my placement in the competition, my art is now featured in their magazine. This is huge. Seriously. Artists dream of being in *International Artist*. It's a resource that we read to further our practices and art techniques, and we consider it almost unattainable to be featured in." With contest submissions from USA, UK, and Australia, to name just a few countries, and a magazine circulation of 75,000, one can see why. It's the kind of success that makes an artist's work more valued, increasing its worth in a collector's art portfolio.

But in March of 2020, it hardly felt appropriate for him to sing his praises during a global pandemic. So he sat quietly on one of the most exciting achievements of his career; making it, in a way, an even darker year. Richard, however, is tenacious — strong as an ox, you might say — and did not let it get him down.

He knew that he had to get creative and keep the momentum. Over the year, he found electronic ways to beef up his practice. He got his website <richardjameshutton.com> back into shape, updated his client/subscriber list, designed an e-newsletter template to brand himself, and then wrote to his following to let them know of his achievement. In May of this year, as the province was slowly re-opening, he got the courage to create an art gallery in Perth.

Richard contacted Art & Class — a downtown business where he had offered private painting lessons before Covid — and proposed a collaboration. During the pandemic, that shop had to reduce



Richard Hutton's new gallery is located in the Art & Class storefront in Perth

their offering significantly, which meant that a large portion of the space was unused. Richard had the idea to transform that square footage into a gallery. With the help of Marguerite Roberts (the shop lessee), some paint, some rearranging and a bit of elbow grease, Richard created a tasteful addition to the local art community. The new gallery, Richard James Hutton Fine Art Gallery, opened on July 1 and is in the front of Art & Class (and next door to the iconic Riverguild Fine Crafts) at 53 Gore Street East. As the name suggests, the gallery exclusively hosts Richard's paintings. Oils, acrylics, and watercolours are all available for purchase. "While my art has been seen around the region in various locations and weekend studio tours over the years, I am pleased to

have a permanent exhibition in downtown Perth, and I look forward to personally greeting the public. I love talking to people about art!" Richard says cheerfully.

This year has been different for everyone. For Richard, it's been a busy one. From international recognition to organized marketing plan to charming brick-and-mortar gallery, Richard has hit a bullseye for local art-lovers. With several impressive sales and a commission already started, it's looking like it might be a cash cow for him.

Richard James Hutton Fine Art Paintings is in the Art & Class storefront at 53 Gore St. E. in Perth. The Gallery is open on Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10AM to 4PM.

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Celebrating a Decade of Fine Craft & Art

This month, General Fine Craft will be celebrating ten years in downtown Almonte. Their carefully curated collection of “outstanding craftsmanship by Canadian artists” has become an integral part of the artistic fabric of the town, and the gallery is both a destination for anyone seeking handmade gifts, and a cheerful place for artists and art-lovers to gather. Owner (and artist) Richard Skrobecki infuses the space with his own welcoming energy and his tasteful attention to detail and display. theHumm caught up with Richard to find out more about this meaningful milestone.

theHumm: Congratulations on ten years! When you and fellow artist Chandler Swain first set out to open a gallery in Almonte, what niches were you trying to fill in this artsy town?

Richard Skrobecki: Thanks — I can't believe it's our tenth year already! Many excellent Almonte galleries came and went, but by 2013 there were no active ones downtown. An ideal space at 63 Mill Street came up for rent and we saw an opportunity to present contemporary craft and art in a gallery setting, with the potential of finding an appreciative following.

Together, Chandler and I had experience as ceramic artists and as organizers of artist-run initiatives and exhibitions. So we understood that art is a universal language, that artists' work has real value and should be presented as such.

We knew a lot of other full-time makers (many from the Lanark County/Ottawa/Lapeche region) and wanted to bring their

high-quality work to Almonte. Essentially, we wanted to make a variety of really good, inspired, value-for-the-dollar creative work available to a whole lot of people.

How has the gallery evolved over the past decade, and what are some of your personal highlights?

Running a business is very demanding — you have to wear a lot of different hats! As working artists we knew it would cut into our personal creative time, but had no idea just how much. We established quickly and the business began to grow. The fifty “back room” feature exhibitions that we curated over the years were always a highlight, with interesting pairings of artists inspiring new ways of seeing their work.

In 2016, Chandler decided to step away as co-owner and return to her full-time studio work (luckily, she has stayed connected by spending a few days in the shop each month). I've kept on with the same mandate of showing excellent work. Over the years some changes were needed — such as ending the monthly feature shows in favour of using the space more effectively, and creating a more robust, relevant online presence.

It has been amazing to see how Almonte's small businesses have grown and prospered in recent years, enlivening the town. I look forward to the time when downtown construction and streetscaping is finished and the physical landscape of the street is improved. With the return of festivals like Puppets Up!, things are indeed looking up!

The pandemic was, among other things, a catalyst for many changes. How

has General Fine Craft pivoted over the past two years?

At a time when most craft/art fairs, exhibitions, studio tours, public galleries and museums were suddenly put on Covid-hiatus, privately owned galleries like GFC became the few venues still making work available to the public. I felt a huge sense of responsibility to continue on with business as usual, and quickly decided to bolster our online presence. Foil Media and Sumack Loft rebuilt the GFC website so I could upload every single item in the shop's stock. This made it easy for customers to make purchases, pick up curbside or choose delivery options.

An unexpected result was starting to get orders from all across Canada, the US and even some from overseas. Also, lifestyle changes due to Covid brought an explosion of locals and visitors who wanted to support small businesses, Canadian-made and hand-crafted goods.

What are some of the ways in which an established gallery like yours assists artists?

GFC is a place to display artists' work with integrity and offer it for sale at their own price level. This provides a level of substantiation and an income outside of their own sales efforts.

We promote their work in the shop, post it on our website, purchase print ads and post on social media platforms; they gain



Gallery owner Richard Skrobecki celebrates the 10th anniversary of General Fine Craft this month!

access to a wide audience with an appreciation for creativity. Artists and craftspeople often work alone, so GFC is also a place where they can feel connected to other makers across the region.

Do you have any special plans to celebrate your tenth anniversary?

We're working on something for later in the year. Meantime, like everyone, I'm very concerned about the war in Ukraine and am raising funds for humanitarian relief. Every bit helps, and it's important to contribute however we can.

I genuinely appreciate the support of our many loyal customers, followers, family and friends who have made GFC a popular destination — thank you all!

Drop in to 63 Mill Street in Almonte and wish the General a happy anniversary, or visit <generalfinecraft.com>.

“Volunteers don't necessarily have the time, they have the heart.”

Mississippi Mills Volunteer Appreciation Reception

April 28th 7:00-8:30PM

Almonte Civitan Hall - 500 Almonte St.

Calling all volunteers, their benefactors and community members, this is an open invitation to celebrate our irreplaceable community volunteers!

A Decadent Dessert Buffet & Cash Bar



Mississippi Mills



Fun Events & Fabulous Festivals Return

Miss Mills Interviews Tiffany MacLaren... about Mississippi Mills!

If you don't live in or near Mississippi Mills, you may be forgiven for not knowing the moniker of this amalgamated area that is home to Almonte, Pakenham and Ramsay Township. And if you've just moved to this area over the past two years, you may not be aware of its dynamic reputation as a hub of artsy, cultural and community events. Fear not! I, Miss Mills (the official puppet mascot of Mississippi Mills), am here to bring you back up to speed! To start, let me introduce my fabulous friend Tiffany MacLaren. Tiffany does about a million jobs in town, which are all lumped together under the title "Community Economic & Cultural Coordinator" (probably so her employers only have to pay her one salary).

When I want to know what's coming up, she is my go-to girlfriend about town. Tiffany was thrilled to sit down with *moi* and dish the dirt on this summer's not-to-be-missed events.

Miss Mills: It's been a long haul, but events are finally starting to pop up like crocuses through the snow. What are some of the things that people can look forward to in April and May?

Tiffany MacLaren: I always feel a renewed energy and optimism in the spring, but this year is extra special as we come out of a two-year break from in-person community events. We celebrate Arbour Week at the end of April, with walks, talks and plantings... It's finally time to hug a tree and maybe even a friend or two!

The Almonte Old Town Hall is positively buzzing these days with a return to yoga and fitness classes, lively choir rehearsals, loads of concerts, a weekend art show and even a Puppets Up! pre-festival event (and that's just April and May).

A little bird told me that there's even a group working to bring the Puppets Up! International Puppet Festival back to town. And I just saw the cutest video of their mascot Nick dancing down Mill Street with Liam the Leprechaun from Celtfest. Can you tell our readers about some of the fabulous summer festivals that will be returning?



Miss Mills (the puppet mascot of Mississippi Mills, pictured here with James Naismith) gets the scoop on all the fun stuff starting back up in town!

can find out about local volunteer opportunities?

Volunteers are the heart and soul of Mississippi Mills. April 28 is the date of our Volunteer Appreciation Reception at the Almonte Civitan Hall. Organizers are extending an open invitation to come and celebrate volunteers. If you aren't a volunteer yet, come out to thank a volunteer. Their enthusiasm will definitely rub off on you. As for volunteer opportunities, people are welcome to call us at the Recreation and Culture Department (256-1077). We will put them in touch with groups who are looking for help. Right now, I know Puppets Up is looking for help for their spring show, and the Light Up the Night committee is looking for people to join the organizing team.

Thinking further ahead, Mississippi Mills has a pretty big year coming up in 2023. How can people get involved?

Yes!! We're so excited that Mississippi Mills will be celebrating 200 years in 2023! We're currently recruiting members for our organizing committee. Broken up into seven working groups — from Arts and Culture to Agriculture — we're looking for people with ideas, and the connections and energy to make them a reality! We plan to celebrate all year long in all corners of the Municipality. To get involved, please send me an email at <tmaclaren@mississippimills.ca>.



Something for Everybunny!



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Humm Fun Feature of the Month —

Summer is on its way, and to help both kids and parents make the most of it, we offer the Humm's annual round-up of summer camp options in the area.

From creating art to exploring nature, from paddling to performing, you're sure to find something of interest on these pages. Happy camping!

Camp Lau-Ren (Overnight Camp, Deep River)

Camp Lau-Ren is a children's summer overnight camp. Located 10km west of Deep River on the Ottawa River, the camp offers six-night co-ed camps for children aged 8–15, an all-girls camp, and a two-night camp for ages 6–7. Accredited by the Ontario Camps Association and the United Church of Canada, the camp has been in operation since 1952. Campers enjoy canoeing, swimming, crafts, and campfires, have lots of fun, and make life-long friends and memories. At the annual free Open House (Saturday, June 18 from 11AM–2PM) you can tour the site, see a campers' cabin, and take a stroll on the beach. See you there! More information at <camplau-ren.com>.

The Academy for Musical Theatre (Perth, Ottawa)

Founded in 1998, celebrating their 25th year, the award-winning Academy for Musical Theatre provides high-quality instruction in music, acting, dance, stage combat, and various aspects of technical theatre to youths of all ages, culminating in the performance of a full-scale Broadway musical. The Academy is a very special community of non-judgmental and spirited individuals with positive attitudes, devoted to providing a fun and safe environment to experiment artistically without fear of negative feedback. Our primary mandate is to build confidence. We are excited to offer programs in both Ottawa (at the epic Gladstone Theatre!) and Perth (at Code's Mill on the Park!), with an exciting slate of workshops this summer including: Disney's *Encanto*, Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*, Lin-Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights*, and *Dear Evan Hansen*. Because everyone deserves a little time in the spotlight! 706–2287 or <musictheatre.ca>.

MERA Summer Arts Camps (McDonalds Corners)

We are excited to offer our most popular Summer Arts Camp at MERA again. MERA <meraschoolhouse.org> is holding two art camps this year on July 11-15 for ages 5-9 and August 8-12 for ages 10-14. This year we will explore the abundant "Patterns in Nature" through printmaking, stamping, painting and sketching. The instructors are Jan Griffiths and Heather Vriends, who are a renowned mother and daughter team and bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the programme.

We are also super excited to be hosting a "Creative Drama Camp" this summer, led by the distinguished actress Alexis Scott. Alexis comes to us with an enthusiastic, creative flair that encourages imaginative storytelling. The dates for this camp are July 25-29 for ages 10-14. For either of these camps, please contact MERA for more information: <meraschoolhouse@gmail.com>.

HoneyBee Homestead (McDonalds Corners)

This camp is for kids outgoing and quiet who thrive with hands-on activities, enlivening their senses and exploring their curiosity. Hosted on a homestead and farm, campers are immersed in gardens, forests and fields, where they attune to the rhythms and cycles of the summer season while befriending living Beings.

Campers wander and wonder to connect to the environment, explore curiosity and develop deeper inquiry. The garden, with hands in the soil, plants seeds to appreciate where food comes from — the awe, the effort in tending to plant friends and celebrating the joys of harvesting. With playful spirits, creative projects, forts, storytelling and games are sprinkled in throughout the day. Being in relationship with nature, adventure and play encourages creativity and self-exploration, and builds self-confidence.

Connect with Melissa at <honeybeehomestead.ca>



TRASHUREHUNT

A Town Wide Spring Clean Up!

Join the Climate Change Action Panel at the Crystal Palace on Saturday, April 23 at 9am as we celebrate Earth Day and clean up our beautiful town!

Featuring refreshments, information booths, live music by Junkyard Symphony, and great prizes.

Visit PERTH.ca/trashurehunt to learn more!

Camp Lau-Ren

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Creative Summer Camps for Kids!

25 Years of Nurturing Creativity

Twenty-five years ago, Heidi Stepanek began offering musical theatre experiences to children and youth — first under the moniker “Kenapets Productions”, then as the Perth Academy of Musical Theatre (PAMT), and most recently as The Academy for Musical Theatre <musictheatre.ca>. Heidi’s CV is replete with theatrical and musical accomplishments: a Bachelor of Music degree focusing on piano and ethnomusicology, a year at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, a Master of Arts degree in Folklore and Folk Music, and working as stage manager with the Canadian Opera Company at the Banff Centre for the Arts, among others. theHumm caught up with Heidi to discuss plans for celebrating their 25th anniversary of engaging youth in theatrical pursuits.

theHumm: What first made you decide to work with youth and children?

Heidi Stepanek: Throughout my academic career I was always attempting to integrate my love of children’s theatre with my studies — a difficult balance to achieve. In high school, I started a travelling theatre company called “The Fountain of Youth Troupe,” or FOYT, with some fellow students. We rehearsed, costumed, created sets and props, then clown-car fitted ourselves into whatever old clunker we could scrounge up, and drove all over the province putting on shows at schools, libraries, community centres and the like. For me, there is nothing more inspiring than feeling the energy from, and with, an inspired and passionate group of youth — feeling like I am helping to stoke those creative fires is so powerful.

This experience became even more powerful during a time when I was completing my Master’s degree at Memorial University in Newfoundland, and I soloed FOYT, taking my costumes and props aboard fishing boats to remote outport communities, some of which had never seen a live performance before. It was magical and inspiring beyond words. Not long after that, halfway through a PhD program, I realized that I could no longer wait on pins and needles for each summer, and decided to (well, more accurately, was compelled to) launch the Academy for Musical Theatre (which I had started as a summer venture two years earlier under the name “Kenapets Productions”) full-time. It was the best decision I’ve ever made, and I haven’t looked back since.

What was the impetus behind expanding your services into Ottawa and transforming from PAMT into The Academy for Musical Theatre?

After seventeen years of PAMT in Perth, I felt a need to expand the program, and to offer it to more young, passionate musical theatre lovers who might not otherwise have the opportunity. I originally considered locations further away — Banff, then Picton, then Huntsville — until I had a wonderful conversation with my friend C. Lee Bates one day at the Sunflower Bakery. She asked me why I was going so far away, and why didn’t I make the commute more manageable and open a branch in Ottawa? She introduced me to her colleague at the Gladstone Theatre, and the rest is history. Eight years later, our



The Academy for Musical Theatre turns 25 this year, and will be celebrating with special summer programs and a reunion in Stewart Park!

programs there are going strong, and I am so grateful that even during the pandemic our hybrid online/in-person programs were so well supported by the community both in Perth and in Ottawa.

What events and shows have you chosen to celebrate your 25th anniversary this summer?

Our summer 2022 “welcome back” program will be offering medley versions of Disney’s *Encanto*, Gilbert & Sullivan’s *The Pirates of Penzance*, and Lin Manuel Miranda’s *In the Heights*. Our teens will also have a chance to perform scenes and songs from the smash Broadway hit *Dear Evan Hansen*.

We are so honoured to be returning to the Stewart Park Festival — our 22nd performance on this iconic stage! Our Perth students will have the opportunity to perform in a Lin-Manuel Miranda festival, including songs and dances from *Encanto* and *In the Heights*.

To celebrate our 25 years, we would like to welcome all Kenapets Productions, PAMT and Academy alumni to join us on stage at the Stewart Park Festival for one special song. We would love to have as many of our theatre family back together again as we possibly can! Our plan is to have a rehearsal together on Friday, July 15 at Code’s Mill on the Park in Perth, and then perform en masse (safely distanced — we can dance and sing on the grass if we don’t all fit on stage!) on Saturday, July 16 at noon on the Festival Main Stage. If you would like to join us or want more info, please email me at <musictheatre.info@gmail.com>. Hope to see you there! If you don’t wish to perform, we would love to see you in the audience!

The testimonials on your website are potent and at times poignant. What are some of the ways in which participation in musical theatre has helped youth to grow and develop?

Rehearsing and performing in musical theatre requires bravery in the extreme. I am acutely aware that the number-one fear of all humans, after death, is being in front of a crowd of people, and I have such great respect for those who choose to face this fear head on and conquer it. Spectacularly. Doing this with others means putting your real self out

there to people who can be strangers at first — what could be scarier than that? And yet, this sharing, this beautiful vulnerability of putting your soul on a plate for all to see, creates some of the strongest connections I have ever experienced. My job is, and always has been, to ensure that each and every person has a safe and encouraging space in which to do this.

I have been honoured to watch strong relationships of all types forming over the years, so that I can say with no reservations that we are truly a theatre “family.” Together, we have created this beautiful space where everyone is free to be who they are, and to experiment in their creativity with no fear of negative judgement from others. I have watched for twenty-five years as youth have grown into themselves, beautifully and confidently, knowing that creativity is not only allowed, but that it is something to be celebrated, and that we, each of us, are not alone.

Find more information or register for The Academy of Musical Theatre’s summer programs at <musictheatre.ca>, and email Heidi at <musictheatre.info@gmail.com> to enquire about joining the reunion at this summer’s Stewart Park Festival!

MERA Summer Art Camp
 July 11 – 15 ages 5–9
 August 8 – 12 ages 10–14
Creative Drama Camp
 July 25–29 ages 10–14
 led by Alexis Scott
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April
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Gearing Up For Camp Staff Opportunities at Camp Lau-Ren

Camp Lau-Ren's Executive Directors, Joanne and Ron Hartnett, are hard at work planning for the upcoming 2022 summer camp season. Although there are many unanswered questions leading up to the summer, they are certain that Camp will open.

Their number one concern is staffing. Joanne explains that since the Camp has not been open since 2019, many senior campers did not have the opportunity to move into counsellor positions and there will be no returning counsellors. She hopes that increased advertising will ensure staffing needs are met.

This year, Joanne hopes to operate the Camp as close to normal as Covid-19 policies allow. She describes the past two years with the Camp closed as surreal. "We are truly fortunate that donors came forward

and helped the Camp financially these last two years," she adds. The Hartnetts missed their interactions with campers and staff. "We hope and pray that the Camp can be fully functional in 2022."

Anyone interested in applying for a counsellor, cook, waterfront, floater or caretaker position can contact Joanne and Ron Hartnett at <hartnett@sympatico.ca>. Registrations for summer camp are open now and more information is available at <camplau-ren.com>. Families are invited to attend the Annual Camp Lau-Ren Open House on Saturday, June 18 from 11AM to 2PM. Come see a campers' cabin, walk the beautiful beach, and go on a guided tour of the Camp Lau-Ren site. The camp is located at 210 Lau-Ren Road, Laurentian Hills, ON, just 10km west of Deep River on Highway 17.



Book-themed Mugs Support Library

Starting April 1, the Perth & District Library will be selling beautiful handmade mugs that feature a book and eyeglass decoration. Handmade by local potter Anne Chambers, the mugs will be available in five different colours and sold as a fundraiser for the library.

Anne Chambers is a studio potter and ceramics instructor who creates wheel thrown and altered functional porcelain. Anne has been actively involved in the craft community, volunteering for both The Ottawa Guild of Potters and FUSION: the Ontario Clay and Glass Association, serving as President on both boards.

"I have always had a library card since I was a child, and have felt the library is one of the main anchors of a community from children right up to seniors. We are so fortunate to have such a wonderful library here in Perth. I would like to

show my appreciation and give back to the Perth library and community," explains Anne.

"We are very appreciative of Anne's generosity and support of the library," says Erika Heesen, CEO/Chief Librarian. "These mugs are gorgeous and would make an excellent gift for any book lover."

Each gift-wrapped mug is \$40, and 100% of the proceeds will go to the library.





The Ten Collective

Third Annual Exhibit of Paintings

By Eileen Hennemann

In April 2018, ten Mississippi Mills artists held their first show, expecting 500 people to visit. By the end of the two-day exhibit, more than 1,200 had attended. In 2019 attendance increased to 1,600. Visitors came from near and far and the artists were overwhelmed and thrilled at the show's success. It was also a very busy weekend for local restaurants and stores.

"The overwhelming success of the last two shows and the demand for our work convinced us to mount a third exhibit this year," said The Ten Collective founder, Eileen Hennemann. "We are very excited about sharing our work with each other's networks and about holding the exhibit once again in a National Historic Site of Canada, the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, in Almonte."

And then the pandemic hit. March 12, 2020 saw us scramble to cancel everything that had been invested in and put in place.

It was a huge disappointment for everyone involved to have to cancel the show. Months of work and anticipation stopped dead. We weren't going to experience the amazing high of greeting fans and patrons, friends and buyers, after having waited for the big weekend that was to arrive just two weeks after the WHO had declared a global pandemic.

And now for the fantastic news: The show is on! It will be held again at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum on Saturday, April 23 and Sunday, April 24, and will be open from 10AM to 5PM both days. Admission to the show and to the museum (for that weekend only) and parking are free.

The Ten Collective artists are Amelia Ah You, Jill Halliday, Eileen Hennemann, Rosemary Leach, Marina Raike, Katherine McNenly, Kaija Savinainen, Lily Swain, Charles Spratt and Maria Moldovan.

The Ten Collective believes the show benefits the artists, the arts community, the town and the museum. Visitors can enjoy the show and a day

visiting the area, stopping to enjoy a coffee or lunch, browsing through unique and interesting stores and enjoying some of the natural sites that surround us. Check out <Almonte.com>, a website that shares the love and success of our "small-town gem".

Visitors to the Textile Museum will experience the history of the woolen industry in the Mississippi River Valley and learn about the impact it had on the social, cultural and industrial development of the region. They can also get information about the exhibits and educational events held at the museum throughout the year.

The third annual show will display new work in a variety of styles and media, with no two artists alike. And there will be a selection of paintings available for purchase.

At the time of writing this article it was determined that drink and food would not be on offer by our TTC Friends. However, they were happy to work with us in 2020 and we thank them again for their kindness and support: HFT Donuts, Cartwright Springs, Fulton's Sugar Bush, Dairy Distillery Vodka, 8008 Lingerie, General Fine Craft, Gilligallou Bird, Sivarulrasa Gallery, and HennemannStanley.com who developed the trademark, branding, marketing material and promotion.

For those interested in purchasing a painting, please note that a cheque, cash or e-transfer is preferred, however some artists use Square. Purchased paintings can be picked up from 4-5PM on Sunday unless other arrangements have been with the artist.

To learn more about the artists, view galleries and read their blog posts, visit <thetencollective.com>. Follow The Ten Collective on Instagram and Facebook for updates on what the artists are creating.

Thanks to theHumm for their unwavering support of our arts community and of the Ten Collective. Thanks to all of Mississippi Mills for being there for us. We are thrilled to be seeing you again soon.

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Fri Apr 1 **Country Pickin Mayhem Band** (Telecaster masters Steve Pitocco, Wendell Ferguson+Shawn McCullough) Dinner+Show \$70+HST+Gratuity, 7-11
Sat Apr 2 **Head Over Heels** (Blues/Folk/Jazz, Gananoque) 5-8
Thu Apr 7 **No Borders Wine Dinner:** A Taste of the Old + New World. Food by Joanne Edwards, Emily + Sarah Brown. Wine Talk by Rasta. Music by Eric Uren. 6-9 \$100 + HST + Gratuity 5-Course Wine + Food Tasting Dinner
Fri Apr 8 **Rob Lutes + Rob MacDonald** (Award Winning Acoustic Blues, Montreal) 6-10 \$50 + HST Dinner + Show
Sat Apr 9 **Doug Vanderhorden** (Folk/Rock Piano + Guitar, Kingston) 5-8
Sun Apr 10 **Lions Club Mobility Bus Fundraiser Brunch** 8:30-11am
Thu Apr 14 Piano Bar with **Benni Vander** (Classic Rock, Picton) 5-8
Fri Apr 15+ **Blues On The Rideau** with **Jack De Keyzer** (Canadian Blues Legend, Toronto) 7-11 \$80 + HST Dinner + Show
Sun Apr 17 **Easter Dinner** 5-8
Thu Apr 21 **Eric Uren** (Folk/Rock, Westport) 5-8
Fri Apr 22 **Nolan Hubbard** (Indie/Folk, Gananoque) 5-8
Sat Apr 23 **Jeff Callery** (Folk/Rock, Brockville) 6-9
Sun Apr 24 **CR5 Bluegrass Band** (Traditional Bluegrass, Lyndhurst) 1-4 \$10 Show Cover
Thu Apr 28 **Matt Dickson** (Classic Rock, Perth) 5-8
Fri Apr 29+ **Young Petty Stones** — The Music of Neil Young, Tom Petty + The Rolling Stones 7-11 \$80 + HST Dinner + Show

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missmillslibrary.com/seed-library Mississippi Mills Public Library

Danah-Lee's *Made in the Image*

The way back to God, or to one's religion, is often found first by finding a way to be true to oneself. Canadian Christian pop artist Danah-Lee pulls back the curtain on such a journey in her cello-studded, piano-infused new album *Made in the Image*.

Earlier this year, Danah-Lee released the single *Home to Myself*. The chorus is simple but powerful and heartfelt: "I'm coming home to myself."

And the process of coming home is one the Ottawa Valley-based artist knows personally, having struggled with her sexuality in the context of her faith. "For years, I grappled with being a Queer within the Church, and carried tremendous guilt — eventually deciding to stop worshipping God through song, because I did not feel worthy

as a Queer," she shares. "After choosing to love myself as a child of God, I rediscovered my faith and I believe there is a place for everyone in the kingdom of God."

Home to Myself begins with bell-like piano and vocals that cascade like clear water. Introspective cello joins the mix, along with warm, honeyed harmonies blending Danah-Lee's crystalline vocals with the rich, deeper tones of backing singer Jeremy Hardy. The song's message is of having abandoned oneself, only to journey back and become stronger than before.

Danah-Lee is a Contemporary Christian/LGBTQ musician, producer, award-winning music educator, entrepreneur and author. Outside of her strong faith in Christ as a member of the LGBTQ community, and outside of her career as an artist, Danah owns and operates a safe and inclusive music school. She was recently nominated for Louder Than The Music's "Christian Album of the Year" and the "Impact Award" at Ottawa's Capital Music Awards. She has released three solo albums and two collaboration albums and has toured extensively throughout North America.

As a Christian artist, she does not fit the traditional mold because of her existence within the marginalized LGBTQ community. It is Danah's hope to merge Christian ideals and a Queer existence into her music. The intention is to inform, engage, educate, and open doors.

The cross-community collaboration as a Queer and Christian has the power, potency and potential to bring change to both the Christian community and the Queer community. After all, the premise of Christianity is love. Her previous album, *These Are A Few of My Favourite Hymns* is a rekindling



Musician Danah-Lee is celebrating a new album with a release party at the Glasgow United Church in McNab/Braeside on April 8

of her favorite songs, stemming back from her time as a youth in the church.

Her single *Home to Myself*, and the 17-track album *Made in the Image*, are available now, and a tour is in the works for later in the year. Danah-Lee received funding support from the Ontario Arts Council.

Album Release Party

Danah-Lee will be hosting an album release party on April 8 at the Glasgow United Church in McNab/Braeside. The special guest for the evening is North Easton, and tickets can be purchased at <danahleemusic.com>.

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Halfway There at the Station Theatre

Norm Foster Kicks Off the Smiths Falls Community Theatre's 2022 Season

Submitted by Smiths Falls Community Theatre

It's been a long time coming, but The Station Theatre in Smiths Falls is starting to open back up. It's been a bumpy two years, not knowing what or when we could perform again. There were Zoom plays, recorded plays and radio plays, and we did venture a live show last fall with restricted seating capacity. Anything to let the audience know that they hadn't been forgotten! But now we are ready to take tentative steps towards a normal remainder of our play season.

Laughter truly can be the best medicine. Smiths Falls Community Theatre knows that's what the audience likes, and let's be honest, it's fun to do, too! Therefore, getting back into the swing of it, they've decided to start the season off with Norm Foster. As so many ticket purchasers say: "You can't go wrong with Norm Foster!"

Directors Lynda Daniluk and Linda Pipher were excited to select *Halfway There* as the first show of 2022. It's a fairly new Foster, first produced in 2016. Dr. Sean Merrit (Rich Croteau) wanders into the small town of Stewiacke, Nova Scotia, exactly halfway between the equator and the North Pole. Recently dumped by his fiancée, he's looking for a new start and soon meets four local women — Janine (Mandi Reed), Vi (Katharine Coleman), Rita (Donna Howard) and Mary Ellen (Chris Winter) — each with their own interesting and sometimes a little naughty (wink, wink) life story. Laughter, tears and the power of true friendship teach them a lot about themselves and each other, along with a bit of romance thrown in for good measure. A feelgood theatre experience filled with incomparable Maritime wit and wisdom!

Please note that Station Theatre is following provincial guidelines, so at the time this article was written, all Covid protocols have been lifted for the venue. However, we strongly support each individual's feelings about masks. If it feels right for you to keep your mask on at the theatre, then please do so. If it's right for you not to wear one, we support that, too. What we will support the most is respect for your neighbour, whatever is right for them. There is no point in us working to put a show on if the audience isn't comfortable enough to enjoy it fully!

This show runs Friday and Saturday, April 22 and 23 at 7:30PM, with a 2PM matinée on Sunday, April 24. The second weekend runs Thursday to Saturday (April 28–30) at 7:30PM and finishes up with a 2PM matinée on Sunday, May 1. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$10 for students. 2020 Season vouchers will also be accepted. There is assigned seating for this show. Tickets can be selected and paid for (cash only) at Special Greetings, 8 Russell Street East in Smiths Falls. You can also order your tickets online with a credit card or PayPal at <smithsfallstheatre.com>, or by phone at 283-0300. Telephone or in-person is the best option if you are using vouchers, wanting to pay by cash, or if you have special seating requirements or requests. Just leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible. If tickets are still available, they can also be purchased with cash a half-hour before showtime, at the door at 53 Victoria Avenue. For more information, please visit <smithsfallstheatre.com>. We look so forward to welcoming you back to The Station Theatre!



Vi (Katharine Coleman) shares some important news with her friends Mary Ellen (Chris Winter), Rita (Donna Howard), Sean (Rich Croteau) and Janine (Mandi Reed) in rehearsal for the Station Theatre's production of *Halfway There*

Perth's "Trashure Hunt"

Come Out on April 23 and Help Clean Up the Streets!

In celebration of Earth Day, Perth's Climate Change Advisory Panel (CCAP) is hosting the first ever Trashure Hunt on Saturday, April 23. A town-wide clean-up, the event will not only help beautify the Town, but will bring together the community with fun, family-friendly activities as well!

"Springtime tends to unearth quite a bit of garbage that was disposed of throughout the winter months. It's the perfect time for the community to come together and tidy up the town we all live in and love," states Sadie Brule, event co-organizer and member of CCAP. "The event will also help teach people to be more conscious of the environment, as well as give them an opportunity to connect with other like-minded organizations."

Scheduled to take place from 9AM to 1PM, the day will begin at the Crystal Palace where groups will get their clean-up kit before heading out to collect litter. Afterwards, the community will gather back at the

Crystal Palace for food, great music from Junkyard Symphony, and the opportunity to learn more about some great eco-friendly organizations. Volunteers will also receive a reusable water bottle, and will have a chance to win some great prizes donated by local shops and restaurants.

"The support from local businesses has been absolutely incredible," says Joan Stephenson-Bowes, co-organizer and CCAP member. "We're very grateful for their generosity."

The Climate Change Advisory Panel is a sub-committee of Council comprised of concerned residents and elected officials. Together they work to help fight climate change and encourage all residents to make the town a greener place to live, work and play by providing information and education.

For more information about the Trashure Hunt and to register for the event, please visit <perth.ca/trashurehunt>.



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The Moment You've Been Waiting For...

The Other Islands in Almonte

From March 30 to May 6, Sivarulrasa Gallery is delighted to present *Michael Pittman: The Other Islands*, a solo exhibition of new paintings by Newfoundland-based artist Michael Pittman. The exhibition can be seen in-person during regular Gallery hours: Tuesdays to Saturdays from 11AM to 5PM, and Sundays from 11AM to 4PM.

In this new body of work, Pittman explores the harsh realities of life on the lesser islands in the coastal waters and bays of his home province. "For most of us, the somewhat brutal realities of this harsh and remote existence are nearly unfathomable,"

by Miss Cellaneous

he states. "Over time, many of these places simply ceased to be, while others were officially abandoned as part of government centralization programs." The works stand in marked contrast to the familiar



Broken House, by Michael Pittman, will be featured in his solo exhibition at Sivarulrasa Gallery

representations of tidy, colourful houses promoted by the tourism industry. Rather, the artist's gaze is drawn to the struggles of people who inhabited these forgotten places, focusing on the roughness of daily life and the hardships of existence. The works are informed by a visual language that the artist has developed over nearly two decades of investigating the geography, history and vernacular cultures of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Michael Jonathon Pittman was born in Newfoundland (Ktaqamkuk), the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaq and Beothuk peoples, to parents of Indigenous and settler descent. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Memorial University, and a practice-led research Masters degree on the visual culture of Newfoundland and Labrador from the Waterford Institute of Technology in Ireland. Over the past two decades his paintings have been exhibited in Canada and abroad, and he has been the recipient of multiple grants and awards for his work, which frequently references the physical environment, traditional knowledge, and hidden histories of the places to which he is connected. He resides in central Newfoundland with his wife and son.

There will be a Vernissage / Meet the Artist event on Saturday, April 9 from 2-4PM. Michael Pittman will be in attendance for this in-person reception.

Registration is not required. Sivarulrasa Gallery is located at 34 Mill Street in Almonte, and more information can be found at <sivarulrasa.com>.

Spring Craft Market

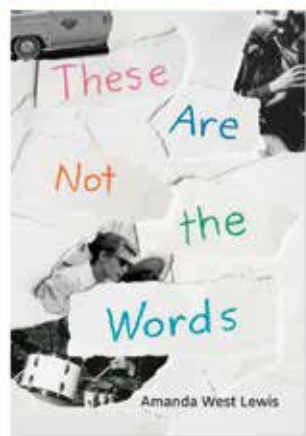
Come on out to Union Hall (1984 Wolf Grove Road near Almonte) on Saturday, April 9 from 10AM to 2PM for a Family & Friends Spring Craft Market! This one-stop shop will have all your Easter, spring and Mother's Day gift needs covered. Vendors will be accepting cash and credit, and will be following the Covid protocols in place at that time. Below is a bit about them...

BW Designs focuses on natural alternatives and essential oil jewellery. From essential oil roller bottles to lava bead bracelets, they hand make all their products with love! **The Lovely Lettering Co.** creates one-of-a-kind home décor for all occasions, from wall art to shelf décor. **Perfectly Imperfect Cards** are created with thought and care using Stampin' Up products. They cover all occasions, encouraging people to send a little thoughtfulness, love and sunshine.

Nicole & Co. offers a variety of handmade resin accessories. Whether you are looking to spruce up your home for spring or find a one-of-a-kind gift for Mother's Day, Nicole & Co. has you covered! **Dot Sips Tea** represents Sipology teas and tea products. From black, white, green, fruit and matcha teas to healthy vitamin boosters, this Canadian company has it to a tea. **Sunshine Sewing Co.** sells items like infinity scarves, scrunchies, headbands, wristlet key chains, snack bags, wet bags, ouchie sacs (hot/cold sac), baby blankets and beanies, all handmade with love and sunshine.



Find funky crafts & art at Union Hall on April 9



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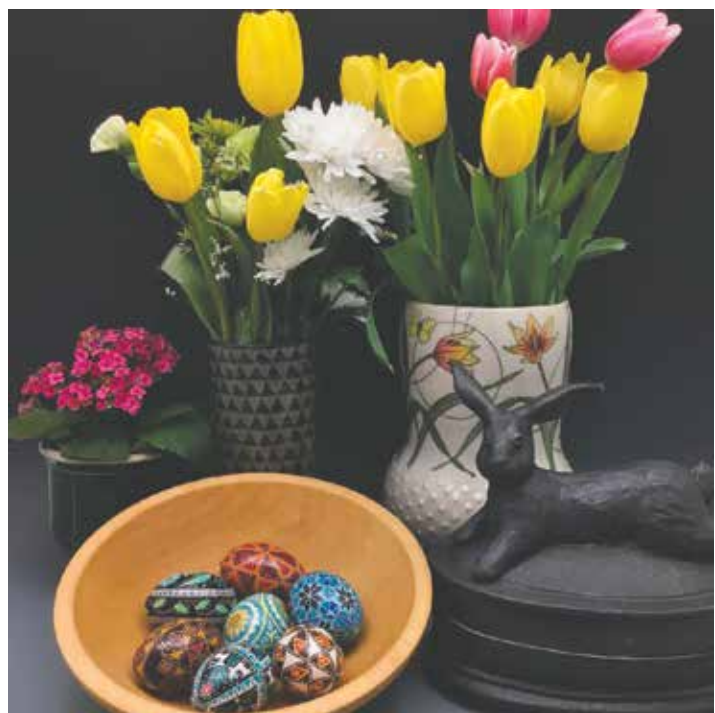


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Pysanky for Ukraine

In March, General Fine Craft welcomed a new artist — and a very different form of art — to their Almonte gallery. Tanya Deacove makes traditional Ukrainian Pysanky: intricately hand painted and dyed eggs. Most popular at Easter, they have lasting appeal by virtue of the skill, thoughtfulness and love that goes into their making. Their origins in Ukrainian folk art go back many generations.

Tanya lives in Burridge (southwest of Perth) and has been involved in the arts since studying at Queen's University in the 1980s. During the pandemic lockdowns she learned how to create Pysanky. Now she enjoys it so much that it has become a ritual to “write” an egg every single day. Inspired by memories of her Ukrainian grandmother's collection and the supportive Pysanky community, she explores a large

variety of traditional patterns and motifs, adapting them in her own ways.

In Tanya's words, “I use local, free-range eggs as the shells are strong and untreated. I enjoy relating to the farmers in the community where I live, as well as getting to meet and greet an assortment of chickens, ducks and geese! For me, Pysanky is practiced as a sacred artform; using vivid colours and symbols to convey good wishes and peace.”

Limited quantities of Tanya Deacove's Pysanky are available at General Fine Craft, 63 Mill Street in Almonte. Visit <generalfinecraft.com> for hours of operation and more information.

A significant portion of Pysanky sales will be donated to the Ukrainian Humanitarian Appeal / Canada-Ukraine Foundation in their efforts to provide support for the people of Ukraine.

Meet the Artist at MERA

Victoria Laube is a multidisciplinary artist who has lived in the Perth area for over 15 years. She is a recent graduate of the Photographic Arts and Production Diploma Program offered at the School of the Photographic Arts: Ottawa (SPAO), and is currently involved in an artist's residency there. She has received numerous visual merit awards and her photography was in the Top 200 of Photolucida's Critical Mass international competition in 2021. In addition, her first self-published book/portfolio, *PROCESS: death and discovery*, was exhibited at the SPAO Centre Gallery in 2021.

Working predominantly in photo-based media but frequently incorporating other elements into her work, Victoria uses her camera to explore degradation, evolution and metamorphosis through a practice of “stream-of-consciousness” shooting.

This exhibition, entitled *THIS/THAT*, is a compilation of 35 photographs taken over the past several years. Sandwiched between wood and encaustic medium, these visual fragments from daily life reference our current enigmatic times — uncertain in nature, not quite this and not quite that.

The exhibition runs from April 4–30. On Sunday, April 10 from 2–4PM, everyone is invited to come and meet the artist and view her work. The pieces are available to purchase as singles or in grouped arrangements. The MERA Schoolhouse is located at 974 Concession Road 9A Dalhousie in McDonalds Corners.

Opening hours of the MERA Schoolhouse and more information can be found at <meraschoolhouse.org>. Exhibition viewings can also be arranged with the artist by emailing <viclaube@storm.ca> or by contacting Wayne Stryde at <gwstryde@outlook.com>.

The MERA Schoolhouse will house an exhibition called *THIS/THAT*, by multidisciplinary artist Victoria Laube, from April 4–30. Meet the artist on Sunday, April 10 from 2–4PM.



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Meet the Author: Jonathon Reid, Almonte, May 5
Climate Lecture: The Role of Individuals, Almonte, May 5
Music Fundraiser for Stir It Up Collective, Almonte, May 6
Indigenous Arts and Craft Show, CP, May 7
Art in the Attic, Almonte, May 7-8
Cheerfully Made Spring Market, Almonte, May 7-8
Book Signing: Amanda West Lewis, Perth, May 8
BOTR: Kenny "Blues Boss" Wayne, Westport, May 12-13
Sherlock Holmes & the Hound of the Basketballs, Almonte, May 12-15
Martyn Joseph, McD Crnrs, May 13
Countries Shaped Like Stars, Almonte, May 14
Queen Flash, Perth, May 14
This Year, Next Year, Perth, May 26-Jun 5
Perth Night Market, May 28
Folkus: The Pairs/Tragedy Ann, Almonte, Jun 4
Wire Wrapping Jewellery Workshop, CP, Jun 4
Canada's Bob Seger Show, Perth, Jun 11
Art in the Garden, Perth, Jun 17-19
Art Works! Perth Art Tour, Jun 24-26
Stewart Park Festival, Perth, Jul 15-17
MidSummer Herbfest, Waba, Jul 24
The Lone Rider, Perth, Jul 28-Aug 7
Puppets Up!, Almonte, Aug 13-14
North Lanark Highland Games, Almonte, Aug 27
Leading Ladies, Perth, Sep 8-18
Meet the Author: Brenda Chapman, Almonte, Oct 1
An Evening of Muses & Mystery: The Attic & Whistler's Mother, Perth, Oct 13-23
Scrooge - The Musical, Perth, Nov 24-Dec 11

WHAT'S ON IN

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday

Almonte Potters' Guild presents a window display of covered jars <almontepottersguild.com>
MERA presents the photography of Victoria Laube <MERAschoolhouse.org> [from Apr 4]
Mississippi Valley Textile Museum presents *Colour with a U* [from Apr 30] <mvtm.ca>
Sivarulasa Gallery presents Michael Pittman's *Other Islands* <sivarulasa.com>
Strévé Design Studio & Boutique presents *Transitions* <strevedesign.com>
Out Of The Box artists' local textile & mixed-media creations <fibre-fling.ca> [from Apr 23]
MMLT Birdhouse Auction at 32auctions.com/birdhousebonanza2022 [Apr 18-29]
Arbour Week Walks, Talks & more listed at mississippimills.ca/arbourweek [Apr 22-30]
Spring Pitch-In Community Clean-up for bag pick-up locations: 256-1077 [Apr 17-30]

<p>4</p> <p>🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Carp 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Current Events</p>	<p>🎵 Drinking Habits, Woodlawn 🎵 Music Trivia, Almonte 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Zoom 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Mtg, Appleton 🌿 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club, Smiths Falls 🌿 TED & Discuss: Alzheimer's is not Normal Aging</p>	<p>🎵 Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/ Shawn McCullough & Friends, The Cove 🎵 Karaoke, Golden Arrow 🌿 Drinking Habits, Woodlawn 🌿 Meditate with Ruth 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Writing 🌿 CP&D Horticultural Society: Garden Design Trends, Carleton Place</p>	<p>🎵 Shirley Valentine, Perth 🎵 Drinking Habits, Woodlawn 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Gaming Group 🎵 No Borders Wine Dinner + Talk + Music, The Cove 🌿 Climate Lectures: Environmental Impact, Almonte 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast, Carleton Place 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Mtg, Carleton Place</p>
<p>11</p> <p>🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Carp</p>	<p>📖 Meet the Author: Melanie Mills, Lanark Village 📖 Pysanky: Ukrainian Egg Decorating Workshop, Lanark Village 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Zoom 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Breakfast, Carleton Place 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Mtg, Appleton 🌿 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club, Smiths Falls 🎵 Music Trivia, Almonte</p>	<p>🎵 Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/ Shawn McCullough & Friends, The Cove 🎵 Karaoke, Golden Arrow 🌿 Meditate with Ruth 🌿 Peter Brown, Kanata</p>	<p>🎵 Piano Bar w/Benni Vander, The Cove 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast, Carleton Place 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Mtg, Carleton Place 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Gaming Group</p>
<p>18</p> <p>🌿 MMLT Birdhouse Bonanza Auction Begins 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Current Events 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Carp</p>	<p>📖 Meet the Author: Heather Tucker, Carleton Place 🌿 TED & Discuss: Are Naps Actually Good for Us? 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Zoom 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Mtg, Appleton 🌿 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club, Smiths Falls 🎵 Music Trivia, Almonte</p>	<p>🎵 Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/ Shawn McCullough & Friends, The Cove 🎵 Karaoke, Golden Arrow 🌿 Meditate with Ruth 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Writing 🌿 Almonte Bridge Club, Almonte</p>	<p>🌿 Climate Lectures: Role of Renewables, Almonte 📖 Meet the Author: Heather Tucker, Almonte 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast, Carleton Place 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Mtg, Carleton Place 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Gaming Group 🎵 Eric Uren, The Cove</p>
<p>25</p> <p>🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Carp</p>	<p>🎵 Music Trivia, Almonte 📖 Lanark County Quilters' Guild Mtg 📖 Lanark Co. Camera Club Meeting 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Zoom 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Breakfast, Carleton Place 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Mtg, Appleton 🌿 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club, Smiths Falls</p>	<p>🎵 Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/ Shawn McCullough & Friends, The Cove 🎵 Karaoke, Golden Arrow 🌿 Meditate with Ruth 🌿 Almonte Bridge Club, Almonte</p>	<p>🎵 Halfway There, Smiths Falls 🎵 Matt Dickson, The Cove 🌿 Mississippi Mills Volunteer Appreciation Reception, Almonte 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast, Carleton Place 🌿 Hackberry Men's Shed Mtg, Carleton Place 🌿 Naismith Men's Shed Gaming Group</p>

Festivals

Maple Weekend, Apr 2-3, 10AM-4PM. Specials, syrup samples, taffy, wagon rides, etc. Participating syrup makers: maple-weekend.ca
Festival of the Maples, Apr 30, 9AM-4PM. Vendors, activities, maple products, entertainment, children's area. Downtown Perth. FestivalOfTheMaples.com

Literature

Meet the Author: Melanie Mills, Apr 12, 1:30-3PM. Enough pieces of crazy to go around. Biography. Lanark Highlands Public Library, Lanark Village. general@lanarklibrary.ca
Meet the Author: Heather Tucker. *Cracked Pots*, sequel to *The Clay Girl*. Register by tel: Apr 19, 10AM, Carleton Place Library, 257-2702; Apr 21, 7PM, Almonte Library, 256-9090.

Book Signing: Gary Smith, Apr 23, 12:30-3:30PM. *Ice War Diplomat: Hockey Meets Cold War Politics at the 1972 Summit Series*. The Book Nook, Perth. 267-2350

Visual Arts

Meet the Artist: Michael Pittman, Apr 9, 2-4PM. Newfoundland-based artist. Sivarulasa Gallery, Almonte. sivarulasa.com
Pysanky: Ukrainian Egg Decorating Fundraiser, Apr 9-10, 1-4PM. \$40 for kit & donation to Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis Appeal (Red Cross). St. Paul's United, Richmond. 416-209-9651
Meet the Artist: Victoria Laube, Apr 10, 2-4PM. Photography. MERA, McD Crnrs, meraschoolhouse.org
Pysanky: Ukrainian Egg Decorating Workshop, Apr 12, 6-9PM. Wax-resist "batik" method. 18+. Lanark Highlands Library. Reg: 259-3068. Free

The Ten Collective Art Show, Apr 23-24, 10AM-5PM. Acrylic, oil, watercolour & mixed media by 10 local artists. Textile Museum, Almonte. thetencollective.com
Fibre Fling Virtual Art Show & Sale begins, Apr 23. Out Of The Box artists. fibre-fling.ca
Lanark County Quilters' Guild Mtg, Apr 26, 7-9PM. lanarkcountyquilters@gmail.com for link. Annual \$30, guests \$5
Lanark Co. Camera Club Meeting, Apr 26, 7-9PM. Speaker: Monique Campbell, street photography. Email for Zoom link presidentoflccameraclub@gmail.com. 1st mtg free. lccameraclub.com
Vernissage: Colour with a U (Quilts), Apr 30, 2-4PM. Juried exhibition of 35 art quilts. Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Almonte. mvtm.ca
Arts CP Fine Art Show & Sale, Apr 30-May 1, 10AM-4:30PM. Carleton Place Arena. ArtsCarletonPlace.com

Theatre

Drinking Habits, Apr 3, 2PM; Apr 5-9, 7:30PM. Farce at a convent. Northwind Centre, Constance Bay. TicketsPlease.ca, \$17/\$15
Shirley Valentine, Mar 31, Apr 1-2, 7-9, 7:30PM; Apr 3, 10, 2PM. studiotheatreperth.com. Tix: \$24 at TicketsPlease.ca
Halfway There, Apr 22-23, 28-30, 7:30PM; Apr 24 & May 1, 2PM. By Norm Foster. Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. Tix: Smithsfallstheatre.com, 283-0300, \$20

Local Food

Carp Farmers' Easter Market, Apr 16, 8AM-2PM. Carp Fairgrounds

Youth

Creative Table, Sat, 10AM-12PM. Weekly drop-in. Supplies are left out for your child to create with. Lanark Highlands Library, 259-3068. Free

Puppet Shows, each at 11AM & 3PM. **Pirate Treasure**, Apr 2, Rock the Arts Puppets; **Punch & Judy (The Silly Version)**, Apr 9, Bob Stutt's puppets; **Felicity Falls**, Apr 23, Rag and Bone puppets. \$12.50 at TicketsPlease.ca. Fundraisers for Puppets Up!
Perth Easter Egg Hunt, Apr 16, 11AM. Bring basket, parent, & kids 8 or under. Music, balloon artist. Stewart Park, Perth. 267-1947

Music

Almonte in Concert: Ladom Ensemble, Apr 2, 7:30PM; **Mireille Asselin**, Apr 24, 2PM (soprano, with piano & guest violinist/violist). Almonte Old Town Hall or stream. Tix: almonteinconcert.com, \$40/20
Bootleg Creedence, Apr 2, 8PM. Farrell Hall, Perth. \$30 TicketsPlease.ca (\$35 door)
Danah-Lee Album Release, Apr 8, 7:30PM. w/North Easton. Glasgow United, 152 Milton Stewart Ave., McNab/Braeside. Tix: \$20. danahleemusic.com

APRIL 2022

Westport Brewing Co. (Westport, 273-2739): 2-4PM
 April 2, 30 TBD
 April 9 Shawn McCullough
 April 16 Jon VVW
 April 23 Scott Owen

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shirley Valentine, Perth Country Pickin' Mayhem Band Dinner+Show, The Cove Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Ted Lalonde, Golden Arrow 	<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maple Weekend, Lanark County Shirley Valentine, Perth Pirate Treasure Puppet Show, Almonte Children's Creative Table, Lanark Village Head Over Heels, The Cove Almonte in Concert: Ladom Ensemble, Almonte Bootleg Creedence, Perth Brock Zeman, Golden Arrow Al Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maple Weekend, Lanark County Drinking Habits, Woodlawn Shirley Valentine, Perth Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Eric Uren, The Cove
<p>8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shirley Valentine, Perth Drinking Habits, Woodlawn Rob Lutes & Rob MacDonald Dinner+Show, The Cove danah-lee Album Release, McNab/Braeside Joel Brown, Golden Arrow Spring Cleansing Retreat, Carp Naismith Men's Shed Zoom 	<p>9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shirley Valentine, Perth Drinking Habits, Woodlawn Family & Friends Spring Craft Market, Almonte Punch & Judy (The Silly Version), Almonte Pysanky: Ukrainian Egg Decorating Fundraiser, Richmond Shawn McCullough, Westport Brewing Co. Meet the Artist: Michael Pittman, Almonte Children's Creative Table, Lanark Village Doug van der Horden, The Cove Roger Dorey, Golden Arrow Al Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 	<p>10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shirley Valentine, Perth Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub Pysanky: Ukrainian Egg Decorating Fundraiser, Richmond Lions Club Mobility Bus Fundraiser Brunch, The Cove Meet the Artist: Victoria Laube, McDonalds Corners Eric Uren, The Cove
<p>15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakfast with Soul BOTR: Jack de Keyzer Band, The Cove Roger Plant Trio, Smiths Falls Danielle Hewitt, Golden Arrow Naismith Men's Shed Zoom 	<p>16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's Creative Table, Lanark Village Al Tambay Solo, Waterfront Gastropub Al Tambay Duo, Waterfront Gastropub BOTR: Jack de Keyzer Band, The Cove Carp Farmers' Easter Market, Carp Perth Easter Egg Hunt, Perth Jon VVW, Westport Brewing Co. All You Need Is Love w/Roxanne Goodman, Perth Cabin Fever, Golden Arrow 	<p>17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spring Pitch-In Community Clean-up begins, Almonte Eric Uren, The Cove Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub
<p>22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P'Earth Day Parade & Earth Day Celebration, Perth The Mavens, Perth Halfway There, Smiths Falls What's the Commotions, Perth Long Range Hustle, Neat Coffee Shop Redneck Limousine, Armprior Arbour Week begins, Almonte Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Joel Brown, Golden Arrow Nolan Hubbard, The Cove The Peter Principle, Kanata 	<p>23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten Collective Art Show, Almonte Felicity Falls Puppet Show, Almonte Halfway There, Smiths Falls Perth Trashure Hunt Clean-up, Perth Scott Owen, Westport Brewing Co. Jeff Callery, The Cove The Keith Glass Band, Perth Fleetwood Mac Mania, Perth Shawn McCullough, Golden Arrow Fibre Fling Virtual Art Show & Sale begins Book Signing: Gary Smith, Perth Children's Creative Table, Lanark Village Al Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 	<p>24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten Collective Art Show, Almonte Pancake Breakfast, Almonte CR5 Bluegrass Band, The Cove Almonte in Concert: Mireille Asselin, Almonte Halfway There, Smiths Falls Eric Uren, The Cove Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub
<p>29</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almonte Lecture Series: Horses Naismith Men's Shed Zoom Ted Lalonde, Golden Arrow Halfway There, Smiths Falls Young Petty Stones Dinner+Show, The Cove 	<p>30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Festival of the Maples, Perth Arts CP Fine Art Show & Sale, Carleton Place Vernissage: Colour with a U (Quilts), Almonte Halfway There, Smiths Falls Young Petty Stones Dinner+Show, The Cove Paul Reddick, Neat Coffee Shop Folkus: Ian Sherwood w/Evangeline Gentle, Almonte Brock Zeman, Golden Arrow Children's Creative Table, Lanark Village Al Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 	<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arts CP Fine Art Show & Sale, Carleton Place Concert for Ukraine, Almonte Halfway There, Smiths Falls Eric Uren, The Cove Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub

Community

Almonte Bridge Club, Wed 1PM, as of Apr 20, Almonte Legion

SF Bridge Club, Tue 1PM, SF Legion

Naismith Men's Shed (naismithmensshed.ca):
 Tue, 9AM, workshop, 174 Wilson St., Appleton;
 Thu, 9AM, breakfast (\$12+), Gourmet Restaurant, CP;
 Thurs, 10:30AM, Gaming Group, Almonte Legion, almontecarver@gmail.com, \$3;
 Fri, 10AM, Zoom chat, nicolasdfry@gmail.com for link
 Apr 4, 18, 10AM, Zoom Current Events Discussion, kbsheldrick@gmail.com;
 Apr 6, 20, 10AM, Zoom Writing Group, almontecarver@gmail.com;

Hackberry Men's Shed:
 Tue, 7PM, Zoom chat, rkamm@connect-well.ca for link;
 Thurs, 7PM, meet for coffee/chat, 134 Stonewater Bay, CP;
 Apr 12, 26, 7:30AM, breakfast (\$12+), Gourmet Restaurant, CP.

Meditate with Ruth, Wed, 8-9AM. Group meditation. Zoom link at meditatewithruth.com. By donation

TED & Discuss: 1PM. Watch online then Zoom discussion. Apr 5, **Alzheimer's is not Normal Aging**; Apr 19, **Are Naps Actually Good for Us?** Presented by Lanark Library, 259-3068. Free

Climate Lectures: 7-8:30PM, Almonte Library, free, register online or 256-1037.
 Apr 7 **Environmental Impacts**; Apr 21 **The Role of Renewables**.

CP&D Horticultural Society: Garden Design Trends, Apr 6, 7PM. Speaker: Tina Lui. Zion-Memorial United Church, Carleton Place. \$5 guest; \$15 annual membership. cphorticulture.ca

Spring Cleansing Retreat, Apr 8-10. w/ food, workshops, yoga, nature. Carp Ridge EcoWellness Centre. 839-1198. \$325

Family & Friends Craft Market, Apr 9, 10AM-2PM. Mother's Day gifts & more. Union Hall, Almonte.

Breakfast with Soul, Apr 15, 9-11AM. w/ Shankari, jewellery designer & spiritual teacher from Bali. powerupyourlife@gmail.com for zoom link. Free

Spring Pitch-In Community Clean-up begins, Mississippi Mills, Apr 17-30. For bag pick-up locations: 256-1077.

MMLT Birdhouse Bonanza Auction Begins, Apr 18, Runs Apr 18-29. Proceeds to High Lonesome Nature Reserve, in memory of Mike Macpherson. 32auctions.com/birdhousebonanza2022

Mississippi Mills Arbour Week, Apr 22-30. Walks & talks listed at mississippimills.ca/arbourweek

P'Earth Day Parade & Earth Day Celebration, Apr 22, 6:45PM. Meet at Stewart Park bandshell, then walk Gore St., Foster, Wilson to the Big Ben statue, then through park. Perth. payanita@gmail.com

Perth Trashure Hunt Clean-up, Apr 23, 9AM. w/refreshments, info booths, live music, prizes. perth.ca/trashurehunt

Pancake Breakfast, Apr 24, 8AM-1PM Maple syrup, ham or sausages, beans or blueberry sauce. GF option. Register: camponi@storm.ca. 808-2781. Union Hall, Almonte. \$10 large, \$8 small, \$5 kids

Mississippi Mills Volunteer Appreciation Reception, Apr 28, 7-8:30PM. Volunteers, benefactors, community members welcome. Dessert buffet, cash bar. Almonte Civitan

Almonte Lecture Series, Apr 29, 7:30pm. History on the Hoof w/Claudia Smith. almontelectures.com for Zoom link. By donation

Peter Brown, Apr 13, 6-9PM. Solo piano, song. Options Jazz Lounge at Brookstreet Hotel, Kanata

Blues on the Rideau: Jack de Keyzer, Apr 15, 16, 7-11PM. Cdn Blues legend. The Cove, Westport. bluesontherideau.ca. \$80 full-course meal+show

Harmony Concerts: **All You Need Is Love w/Roxanne Goodman**, Apr 16, 7PM, Gospel music, \$20-25; **The Mavens**, Apr 22, 7:30PM, Lynn Miles-Susan Crowe-Shari Ulrich, \$35-40; **The Keith Glass Band**, Apr 23, 7PM, rock & roll, \$25-30. Studio Theatre Perth. Tix: harmonyconcerts.ca

What's the Commotions, Apr 22, 7:45PM. w/Beatlejuice. Spring kick-off concert by StewartParkFestival.com, at the Crystal Palace. \$15

The Peter Principle, Apr 22, 6-10PM. Peter Newsom & Peter Brown: jazz blues. Options Jazz Lounge at Brookstreet Hotel, Kanata

Fleetwood Mac Mania, Apr 23, 8PM. Farrell Hall, Perth. Tix: TicketsPlease.ca, \$34 (\$39 door)

Folkus: Ian Sherwood w/Evangeline Gentle, Almonte, Apr 30, 8PM. Almonte Old Town Hall or stream. Tix: TicketsPlease.ca, \$30/20

Concert for Ukraine, May 1, 4-6PM. Ewashko Singers & more. Almonte Old Town Hall. mm4ukraine@gmail.com. Tix: TicketsPlease.ca, \$30

Pub Listings

Neat Coffee Shop (Burnstown, 433-9960): 8PM
 Apr 22 Long Range Hustle, \$25
 Apr 30 Paul Reddick, \$30

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

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

The Cove (Westport, 273-3636): 5-8PM unless noted; Wed Wings 'n Tunes & Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough & Friends, 5:30-8:30PM; Sun Eric Uren
 Apr 1 Country Pickin' Mayhem Band, 7-11PM, \$70 dinner+show
 Apr 2 Head Over Heels
 Apr 7 No Borders 5-Course Wine & Food Tasting Dinner, Wine Talk, Eric Uren, 6-9PM, \$100
 Apr 8 Rob Lutes & Rob MacDonald Dinner+Show, 6-10PM, \$50
 Apr 9 Doug van der Horden
 Apr 10 Lions Club Mobility Bus Fundraiser Brunch, 8:30-11AM
 Apr 14 Piano Bar w/Benni Vander
 Apr 21 Eric Uren
 Apr 22 Nolan Hubbard
 Apr 23 Jeff Callery, 6-9PM
 Apr 24 CR5 Bluegrass Band, 1-4PM, \$10 cover
 Apr 28 Matt Dickson

Apr 29-30 Young Petty Stones, 7-11PM, \$80 dinner+show

Golden Arrow Pub (Perth, 267-4500): 9PM, Wed Karaoke
 Apr 1, 29 Ted Lalonde
 Apr 2, 30 Brock Zeman
 Apr 8, 22 Joel Brown
 Apr 9 Roger Dorey
 Apr 15 Danielle Hewitt
 Apr 16 Cabin Fever
 Apr 23 Shawn McCullough

Rob Roy's Pub (Smiths Falls, 283-9093):
 Apr 15 Roger Plant Trio, 8-11PM

Uptown Resto Bar (Armprior, 622-2227):
 Apr 22 Redneck Limousine, 8-11PM

The Waterfront Gastropub (CP, 257-5755):
 Sat. Al Tambay, 3-6PM & 10PM-1AM
 Sun. Redneck Limousine, 3-6PM

These Are Not the Words

A New Semi-Autobiographical Novel by Amanda West Lewis

Reading the press release for Amanda West Lewis's latest book, *These Are Not the Words*, I'm immediately struck by two lines from

by John Pigeau

Missy, who is the book's central character and narrator. *I'm Miranda Billie Taylor*, she says, introducing herself at the beginning of the novel. *I make sense of the world with words.*

I'm a writer. Many of my friends are writers. Any one of us might have said that. That is, it seems to me, what writers do. We make sense of the world with words. With stories. And, as with life, a lot of the discovery happens in the journey itself.

That is partly what happens to Missy in Amanda West Lewis's latest novel, which is based on the events and people of Amanda's own childhood, set against the backdrop of New York City's legendary jazz scene in the 1960s. In time, Missy comes to see her "cool" parents — her mom goes to art school, her father is a jazz drummer who works days in advertising — as flawed human beings.

Amanda says writing about Missy's self-discovery was a "freeing" experience.

"We are all flawed, of course," she says, "but one tends to hold one's parents in a different regard. To blame them or revere them. Getting to a place where you can see them for the flawed people that they were — people who had unfulfilled dreams, loves,

passions and desires like yourself — takes time and work."

"I didn't set out to write a book that featured a young girl who suddenly saw her parents for who they were. That happened along her journey. I think Missy still has a lot to learn and come to grips with by the end of the novel. But she understands more about herself while she is learning how to let go of her parents. And isn't that what we all need to be able to do?"

These Are Not The Words is a semi-autobiographical novel. In it, we see the not-so-glamorous side of an often-glorified time and place.

"People are fascinated that my childhood included Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, and many others from the jazz scene at that time," Amanda says. "I understand how exciting it must sound. However, those people and places sat in a part of my childhood that didn't last very long and was connected to a lot of pain. They were very dark times. It was not a scene for children, yet there I was."

"Children don't think of their lives as extraordinary or different from others. I wanted to explore that historical moment from the perspective of someone for whom it was an everyday thing. That way I could show a bit of the underbelly. I wanted to show the excitement, certainly, but not to glamourize it."

Sounds like a tough book, doesn't it? By all accounts, it is. But authors who've read it also say it's "a stunning story," "a

poetic punch to the gut," that it is "splendid, genuine, and beautifully told," and that the novel is "sweet" as well as heartbreaking and, in the end, "a masterpiece."

"The book is called 'semi-autobiographical,' which means that there are real people who do imaginary things and imaginary people who do real things," Amanda explains.

She says it wasn't the easiest thing to do. "I think that the greatest challenge in this kind of fiction is not getting locked into 'truth.' I've allowed myself to go from kernels of things that 'actually happened' to fabrication supported by fact. I have used a number of events that didn't happen to me but did happen to other people in the story. It's a weaving together of an alternative past."

"That said, there were some facts that didn't want to be changed. Whenever I was skirting around something that was too hard and I tried to fictionalize it, it came back to bite me and to insist on being heard. Writing is like that. It takes over sometimes, as though it knows the path better than you do."

Interestingly, Amanda says she's never had any desire to write about her own past. Her mother, Laurie Lewis, has written two creative memoirs, and her grandmother also wrote a memoir. "That seemed more than enough for one family!" says Amanda.

This novel came out of previous decisions Amanda had made as a writer.

"I had written two historical novels about young people and drawn on my own perceptions to understand them and their lives.

I have always been interested in how young people perceive and interact with the world. But it wasn't until I was doing a masters in Writing for Children and Young Adults that I was encouraged to find that place in my own life, the place where I could see myself as a child, interacting with the world.

"By working with elements of my own past, I was able to contextualize them and live in them more deeply than I could have when they were actually happening."

Writing *These Are Not the Words* was clearly a rewarding experience for Amanda. I think it's safe to say it will be just as rewarding for her readers.

These Are Not the Words is available as of April 5 at your local independent bookstore or favourite chain. Amanda will be doing some in-person launches and readings, and she's pretty excited about that.

"Oh, yes!" she says. "I have done so much online over the last two years, and it will be wonderful to be out with people. I have an in-person and virtual launch in Ottawa (Carleton Dominion Chalmers Centre, April 9), an in-person launch in Kingston (Novel Idea, April 20), and an in-person launch in Perth (The Book Nook, May 8 at 2PM). I must admit that the idea of reading from the book, seeing/hearing people's responses, of actually signing books for people and talking about it face to face (or mask to mask) is so exciting I can hardly breathe!"

Find out more about Amanda and her book at <amandawestlewis.com>.

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Festival of the Maples Returns to Perth!

After a two-year hiatus, it's now time to celebrate our region's most famous agricultural commodity — sweet, savoury maple syrup! Once again, local maple syrup producers are the stars of the show at the Perth Festival of the Maples being held Saturday, April 30 in downtown Perth. For the past 46 years the Festival of the Maples has continued to grow, but it still maintains its grassroots focus on area maple producers. The annual festival has been a welcome rite of spring since 1976, and “ground zero” for producers and maple syrup lovers in Lanark County.



After a two-year hiatus, Perth Festival of the Maples returns on April 30. Sweet!!

This year's Festival is being organized and presented once again by the Perth & District Chamber of Commerce. Chamber Manager Tracey Raycroft says: “This free yearly event is really the grand finale of the syrup season. Our local producers are proud of their products and can't wait to share them”. Raycroft adds that producers will also enter their products for judging in the festival's annual syrup competition run by the Lanark & District Maple Syrup Producers Association. Awards will be handed out at the festival's main stage on Herriott Street during the opening ceremonies on festival day. In addition to maple syrup producers, the festival features a wide array of artisan and food vendors, farm products, retail and community and charity exhibitors from 9AM until 4PM. Festival Co-ordinator Jennifer Perkin says vendor registration has been busy. Perkin states: “The phone has been ringing off the hook since we started advertising the festival. This year we will be including Foster Street and adding different roaming entertainers, children's

activities and fun competitions, while maintaining a comfortable distance for vendors and visitors.” The festival kicks off with a pancake breakfast at the Perth Legion from 8–11AM, and the annual Classic and Antique Car Show will be on display on Foster Street. On the festival's main stage on Herriott at Gore Street, live entertainment will continue throughout the day with the addition of roaming entertainers. The Maplefest “Sap Tapping” and “Wood Cookie” Challenge returns at the main stage at 1PM, when two-person teams test their skills by drilling spile holes for sap buckets and wielding old-time band saws to clock the fastest log-sawing times.

There are new activities planned for the Tay Basin this year, says Children's Play Park Co-ordinator David Thompson. “We're partnering with the Perth Firefighters Association with demonstrations of their Fire Dawgs Sports Programs,” explains Thompson, “and youngsters will be able to join in a variety of fun challenges.” The Play Park will also feature bouncy rides, a rock-climbing wall and zip-line run by Ry-J's Climbing Adventures, along with pony rides, a petting zoo and Korny Klown.

The Chamber offers a free parking and shuttle service running from the Perth Campus of Algonquin College on Craig Street to Gore Street. The Algonquin College Police Services Program and OPP Auxiliary Unit will assist with traffic control and patrol.

For more details, please visit <festivalofthemaples.com>.



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Climate Network Lanark

The Orange That Went to Nunavut

This week in my scouring of mainstream and independent news sources, amongst all the awful stuff that was so utterly daunting, one little story stood out. It seemed to solidify all the thoughts about Climate Change and food security I was trying to create a story around.

by Chandler Swain

This was the fascinating piece on what it costs to get an orange from where it is was grown in California to a store in our Canadian Arctic 6,000 kilometres away.

There was so much about this little story that grabbed me. It's hard to unpack, but for some reason my flow of consciousness went right to the old saying about turning swords into ploughshares: Imagine if all the energy and funding (and profit) to manufacture armaments were magically turned toward food production? And further: to make sure the planet can support these efforts?

Those tropical foods going to the Arctic is a very layered issue. Where do we start the unpacking? Could it be with Ukraine, which usually grows its own food and exports tonnes of grain to hungry places where war has decimated local food production, such as in East Africa? Or is it with the climate change issues in the Arctic or the drought in California? Could it be here in this county where huge swaths of farmland are now growing GMO soy and corn for biofuels and animal feed? Every year we see more and more precious hedgerows torn out and carbon-sinking marshes drained to this purpose.

It can't be emphasized more urgently how we need to reassess how we think about the food we grow and consume. Climate Network Lanark has a strong mandate to make sure an aggressive Climate Action Plan is implemented in Lanark County. We must make sure we are doing our part to address these complex issues in the intertwined web of living on planet Earth.

Reading the responses I got when I reached out to two of our very successful food-related businesses in the county was inspiring. What these growers and producers are doing is illustrative of a huge and growing number of actions around the globe that can show us the way to sustainable, successful, creative solutions that not only support the planet but our personal health as well.

Win-win, as they say!

First, I asked Alberto Suarez Esteban, a popular grower from Pakenham and teacher of his techniques of regenerative food growing, to condense into a tasty tidbit his methods for growing loads of vegetables for his happy customers.

From Alberto: "We started **Nature's Apprentice Farm** <naturesapprentice-farm.ca> to contribute to solutions for the biodiversity, water and climate crises we are collectively facing. The main way we lower our Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions is by avoiding them in the first place. For example, we farm without a tractor or similar heavy machinery, we keep driving to a minimum, delivering only locally once a week, and we are building a root cellar

this spring to keep our veggies cool in the summer and from freezing in the winter, without using electricity.

"Two measures we are introducing this year to further reduce our GHG emissions are moving away from plastic packaging (as soon as we finish what we have in stock) and installing solar panels to power the farm with 100% renewable energy. Finally, we use regenerative farming techniques (no-till, chemical-free, composting, cover cropping, organic mulches, hedgerows and perennials) and we help other people and businesses to compost organic waste with the goal of capturing more carbon than we emit. We are part of the Sustainably.eco program, which tracks our progress and keeps us accountable. In the future, we would love to build a passive solar greenhouse that allows us to have produce for the community year-round without external energy inputs other than the sun, and we hope to do our deliveries with an electric vehicle."

I have visited Alberto's farm and it is utterly delightful to witness this powerhouse of a business flourishing and expanding. So, Alberto grows the food and runs a thriving CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) business. Next in this continuum was asking Petra Graber, who runs the busy **Good Food Co.** in Carleton Place, what she does in her business to address climate issues and GHG emissions. Alberto grows food. Petra prepares it and serves it.

From Petra: "The Good Food Co. <good-foodcompany.ca> has been diverting their organic waste away from landfill since it opened in 1997. Food waste is brought to a local rural property and used for animal feed and compost (keeping it out of local landfill where it generates atmosphere-destroying methane). The restaurant works hard at wasting as little food as possible by producing small batches and offering food with or without side dishes so customers can choose just enough to eat. We have also been sending prepared food that is approaching its due date for freshness to a local charity. We source most of our ingredients from producers within a 200-kilometre radius, including within Lanark County. Most of our take-out packaging is recyclable and compostable paper products manufactured in Canada. We are currently transitioning to using the services of an Ontario packaging company that collects, sanitizes, and re-distributes their take-out containers for up to 100 uses. We offer a 'green discount' to customers who bring in their own reusable container or coffee mug. We have replaced older refrigeration with 'Energy Star' rated appliances. I live above my café and my employees all live in Carleton Place, so their commutes are minimal."

There are many more sustainably focused food growers and producers in our county that we can support. The growth of support at local farmers markets is inspiring. It's great to know something so creative and life sustaining is only a shopping trip or meal away. For more about local food growers and producers, go to Lanark Local Flavour <lanarklocalflavour.ca> and Think Local Lanark <thinklocallanark.com>.

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Union Hall Launches New Season

Pancake Breakfast Kicks Things Off on April 24

By Linda Camponi

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the folks at Union Hall have been busy! Fundraising efforts have allowed us to continue sprucing the place up so that we are ready to hit the ground running now that public health restrictions have been eased to some extent.

Back in 2018, we completely renovated our two washrooms, making one accessible. Since that time, we have made necessary repairs to the building, fixed the roof, and painted the exterior. A brand new ramp has been installed at the front door to make the hall a truly barrier-free meeting place. Kitchen renovations are nearing completion, with a view to improving safety and convenience for volunteers and hall users. More projects are in the planning stages, made possible thanks to income from hall and sign rentals, craft sales and donations from generous community members. Increased grants from Mississippi Mills and contributions from The Hub have also provided a big boost.

Hall bookings are pouring in, and we are gearing up for our "annual" Pancake Breakfast — last held in March 2019. Union Hall quality is legendary: fresh-made pancakes with local syrup courtesy of Fortune Farms, ham or sausage, and a choice of blueberry sauce with whipped cream or baked beans on the side. A gluten-free option is also available. To wash it all down: orange juice, tea and fresh-brewed Equator



The wonderful volunteers at Union Hall are excited to welcome people back for a Pancake Breakfast!

coffee. March was a little too early this year to count on the loosening of restrictions, so we have chosen Sunday, April 24. Fingers crossed — we will continue to monitor public health guidelines, trusting we can carry off the event as planned.

Pre-pandemic Pancake Breakfasts were provided to more than 200 diners in a four-hour period. To reduce crowding, and to keep our volunteers and visitors safe, we are making a few changes this year. We will limit the number of diners in the hall to about half-capacity, we're extending our hours, and we will be trying out a new system of pre-registration. To guarantee a table, we are encouraging visitors to pre-register for a particular one-hour time period. Here's how it works: contact us and tell us when you'd like to come. At the door, we'll have a list of people for each one-hour slot. If you have pre-booked, you will come right to the front of the line. This will help us to manage the crowds while reducing the inconvenience of long line-ups for you. If you don't book ahead but succumb to hunger pangs while driving by, you'll still be welcome, of course — we'll do our best to accommodate everyone.

We need extra volunteers! If you'd like to help out before, during or after the event, let us know!

Union Hall Community Centre is located at 1984 Wolf Grove Road at Tatlock Road, in Mississippi Mills. The Pancake Breakfast will take place on Sunday, April 24 from 8AM to 1PM. To volunteer or book your time slot for arrival, please contact Linda by email at <camponi@storm.ca> or by phone or text at 808-2781.



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Why I Need My Cookbooks

Today's the day for really good gingerbread cake. There are a gazillion foodie websites with hundreds of recipes, but you're not going to find a better one than what Lyle's Golden Syrup put out in the 1970's. Every recipe in their book features "Golden" in the title, so you know they're not too concerned about calorie content.

by Glenda Jones

It's held together with Scotch tape, and many of the pages are so stained it takes a stretch of imagination to remember the ingredients. You know it; you have books like this too. There's the Golden Gingerbread, the Golden Apple Snow and the Golden Custard, which were dessert mainstays. We may not be able to get Lyle's Golden Syrup anymore, but the thickest syrup I can find is a decent substitute when I'm desperate.

The Peg Bracken "I Hate to Cook Book" of an even older vintage needs an elastic band and a big metal clip to keep everything together. There's the Stay a-Bed Stew, the Elevator Lady Spice Cookies, proper Seven Minute Frosting, and a dessert that features ice cream, a good dollop of liqueur and some blackberries, and oh my, you'd think you were a real chef.

I have the original *Canadian Living* cookbook, again graced with an elastic band to keep everything from escaping into the bookshelf. It's got the lemon meringue pie, the pork roast, the honey drop cookies and the monkey bread recipe that have seen many outings. I can still leaf through it and find what would taste good on a given day, never mind that it's made with butter and likely more sugar than we need.

After 56 years, my *Better Homes & Gardens* cookbook is still my all-time favourite. For a young bride, it was an essential with all the details for canning, roasting, planning a menu, making piecrust, making bread, and preparing a casserole fit for lunch with your child's teacher. [This was a once-a-year tradition, to walk home at noon with your teacher, and have your Mom make her lunch.] Canned soups, chopped celery, a can of salmon or tuna, pasta, all very exotic. There was no mention of jalapenos or coriander or Pad Thai sauce. But if you need to know how to roast a chicken



or make Spanish Rice with pork chops, it is all in that book. The index is now fragile scraps out of order, the cookie recipe pages are in tatters, and I've rewritten the bread recipes and taped them over the originals since they've become indecipherable. That book is held together with heavy-duty duct tape, making it a treasure that I'm sure none of my kids will want to inherit. However, they could read it through and find the very dishes that they ate as children.

I used to have a recipe box with hand-written index cards I don't imagine they even sell anymore. When they got so dog-eared the titles were off them,

I moved them all into a little photo album, one recipe per page. Now, that was a stroke of genius! No more splatters, very organized, and easy to find Pennies from Heaven (carrots cooked in butter and orange juice), or Parkins, or Granola, the original 1968 recipe from *This Country in the Morning*. There's also the recipe for wedding cake, aka Christmas cake. Don't be put off by the one pound of butter or the vast quantities of glazed fruit. Do remember the hands that wrote those treasured cards.

When I'm leafing through a magazine and find something novel, I cut it out and throw it in the big bowl in the corner of the kitchen. When that gets to overflowing, and I've probably not made half the recipes, I purge the cuttings, and keep the best ones in big photo albums, in some semblance of order, but only if I've actually made the recipe and it turned out well. I annotate it with the date and occasion. I've got the best dog treats you can imagine, a fine curry recipe, Witches Brew (panna cotta and orange mousse), and a scone recipe that never fails.

There are other old cookbooks on the shelf, one called "Food that Really Schmacks" which is a fun read as well as a slew of excellent and very basic old-time goodies. The Banana Cake with Penuche icing is beyond wonderful! Then there's the very old and tattered *Best of Bridge* muffin book, plus another muffin book that lost its cover a long time ago. Those two are amalgamated into a pile of loose pages totally out of order for anyone but me. I've got two elastics on that mess.

I've also got a beautiful dessert recipe book that has pictures to salivate over, but really not something I'd tackle unless I was aiming to make a total mess in the kitchen. Bowls, beaters, spring-form pans, an icing decorating kit, food colouring, double boiler, chocolate, too many eggs, pastry flour and more, all to produce a three-layered something that no army would want because it would be a total disaster by the time I'd waded through the recipe. However, I keep the book, because it provides a touch of fantasy in the gorgeous photos.

Sure, the foodie sites can be fun to peruse, but I need those old books that say: "Try this, you'll like it, and you've got all the ingredients." Besides, if your Mom made it, you'll get the aroma and the taste of comfort food we all crave. Just this once, forget the calories and enjoy!

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Indigenous Arts & Crafts Show



Zion-Memorial Church in Carleton Place will host an arts & crafts show on May 7 featuring works by fabulous Indigenous artists. It will raise funds for **Art For Aid**, the charity started by Colleen Gray (whose work is pictured here).

Zion-Memorial United Church, located at 37 Franklin Street in Carleton Place, is delighted to be hosting an Indigenous Arts and Crafts Show on Saturday, May 7 from 10AM to 4PM. The day will begin at 9AM with a smudging ceremony for those who would like to take part.

Organizers anticipate that this show will become an annual event with all of the featured artists and artisans coming from the Ottawa Valley or Eastern Ontario. They will be displaying and selling a wide variety of distinctive artistic creations of various modalities. You can expect to find leather and beadwork, jewellery and paintings. There is no admission charge for the event, and all the proceeds will go to Art for Aid <artforaid.ca> and to the artisan vendors. The Art for Aid charity was started by one of the featured artists, Colleen Gray,

well known for her stunning paintings. This well-established program sends art supplies to remote northern reserves to provide children there with the opportunity for some basic art instruction.

Other artists are Pam Cailloux, Manitok Thompson, Debee Nichol, Beverly Anger, Debra J. O'Toole, Marg Boyle, Chelsea Brosseau, Sharon McKeigan and Coleen Simpson. In addition, Stephanie Tesio will be displaying her medicinal herbs from right across Canada.

Come and have an enjoyable and unique experience at Zion-Memorial on Saturday May 7!

For more information about this show, please contact Helen Larson at <larsonh@bell.net>.

Author Series in Almonte

By Pam Harris

Mill Street Books and the Friends of the Mississippi Mills Public Library are delighted to partner to bring you a variety of writers talking about their latest works. This is a free series to celebrate authors, reading, local bookstores and public libraries. All readings will be presented at the Almonte Branch of the Mississippi Mills Public Library.

Opening our series is Heather Tucker. Well known for her incredibly beautiful and artistic journals and scrapbooking, Heather went on to write a stunning debut novel *The Clay Girl*, an ABA Indie Next Pick. Now she has followed up with *Cracked Pots*, the much-anticipated sequel. Join Heather on Thursday, April 21 at 7PM.

On May 5 at 7PM, we welcome debut writer and historian Jonathon Reid, who brings us a compelling biography, *The Captain Was a Doctor — The Long War and Uneasy Peace of POW John Reid*. Jon artfully interweaves the stark reality of the Battle of Hong Kong and the personal with compassion and insight. A story of unsurpassed heroism indelibly altering lives near and far.

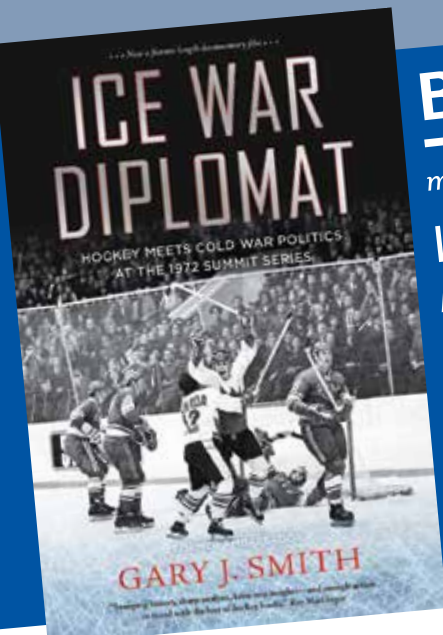
The series will continue in the fall with Canadian crime fiction author Brenda Chapman; Monica Blackburn (author) and Sam Hamilton (illustrator), who worked collaboratively on a wonderful children's series that includes *Do it, Earl! Do it!*; and Tim Cook, the Great War Historian at the Canadian War Museum, who will be reading from his latest release, *Lifesavers and Body Snatchers*, which is a definitive medical history of the great war. Dates and times TBA. To register for any or all events please email <millstreetbooks.com> or call 256-9090.

ling biography, *The Captain Was a Doctor — The Long War and Uneasy Peace of POW John Reid*. Jon artfully interweaves the stark reality of the Battle of Hong Kong and the personal with compassion and insight. A story of unsurpassed heroism indelibly altering lives near and far.

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