

DECEMBER 2021

the Humm

free

Arts,
Entertainment
& Ideas



The 2021 Gift Giving Guide



p.30 & 31
December's Events



p.7

Sketchy Santa in Almonte



p.18

Back in Folkus



The Art of Peggy Schenk p.5



Pat's Pick
for
December:

Patrick Kelly
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

My good friend Santa told me that he was planning to make an appearance in Almonte for two weekends in December. I checked it out... and it seems a bit sketchy to me!

On December 10, 11, 16, 17 & 18, come out and see

Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts!

presented by Humm Team Productions. This is definitely an adult-themed show with plenty of hilarity, a touch of music, a puppet or two, and an appearance by yours truly.

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A Note from the Vinyl Café

Hi Humm — thanks for running the article in the November issue about the Stuart McLean sign now on Mill Street in Almonte. We received a lovely note from the CBC Vinyl Café that I thought your readers should know about. Community action connects stories in so many ways — and you're doing a great job at it!

Jess Milton, producer The Vinyl Café and Executor of the Estate of Stuart McLean, wrote: "We were delighted to learn that Stuart will be honoured in this way. With his work, Stuart reminded us that we all have a story to tell and that those stories are important. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your story."
— Heather Phaneuf



Pictured above are Stephen Brathwaite, Heather Phaneuf, and the sign they helped install on Mill Street in Almonte. The sign commemorates Stuart McLean's 2013 visit to the town.



Who's Reading theHumm

On a recent trip to Egypt, Jana Seto (Almonte native) and her mom Kate stopped and read theHumm while enjoying the pyramids. The entire trip was fantastic, with pictures and memories to last a lifetime. Many thanks from avid Humm reader Kate Seto.
— Thanks from theHumm for sending in this lovely shot!

Thank You, Humm Patrons!

Congratulations to this month's winners of our Red Carpet draw. Mary Decuyperre won two tickets to see *Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts* at the Almonte Old Town Hall.

If you like what we do, please consider supporting us! A few options include visiting <thehummm.com> for links to our patronage campaign, subscribing to our weekly "Hummail" newsletter (find a link on our website), and telling our advertisers you saw their ad in theHumm. If you read this before December 18, you can also purchase tickets to *Sketchy Santa* and support both theHumm and Puppets Up!

Thank you for your support, and have a very happy holiday season.
— Kris & Rob Riendeau



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theHummm is a monthly arts, entertainment and ideas newspaper delivered free to businesses and visitor attractions in Almonte, Perth, Carleton Place, Westport, Pakenham, Carp, Arnprior, 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:

Everyone who has worked with us over the past 4 months (or longer!) to bring Humm Team Productions' *Sketchy Santa* show to the stage. We couldn't have done it without you (nor would we have wanted to)!

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Friday Night at the Movies
at Studio Theatre Perth
December 3

Ambre McLean
at Station Theatre, Smiths Falls
December 3 & 4

Sketchy Santa
at The Almonte Old Town Hall
December 10-18

Winter Wonderland
at Carleton Place Junction
December 10-12

Folkus Concert Series
at The Almonte Old Town Hall
2022 Season Passes

Showing the Local Love for the Holidays!

Here at theHumm we're big on local economies. The retail and service businesses in the small towns that we cover play a huge role in the cultural life of those towns. Each store, restaurant, or small enterprise attracts and serves a particular clientele — some inside the community, some from outside.

by Kris and Rob Riendeau

Some businesses host their own special events; others join together with local festivals to make the whole experience more vibrant. Many provide support in cash or in kind to local initiatives. All of them add their own particular flavour to the delicious mix that is small-town Ottawa Valley. A healthy local economy is an essential component to a healthy community.

It is with this in mind that we bring you theHumm's 21st annual **Gift Giving Guide!** Our hope is that you'll find two kinds of inspiration in the many lists that appear throughout this month's issue. As you peruse the "Gifts to Lift the Spirits," "Gifts Made in the Valley" and "Gifts for Funky People," we hope

you'll discover the perfect present for everyone on your list. But we also hope that you'll be inspired to investigate even more of the independent, locally owned and run businesses throughout our coverage area. In doing so, you're likely to encounter not only friends and neighbours, but also some old-fashioned small town peace and joy — not to mention amazing customer service!

The gifts we buy locally do double-duty by giving pleasure to the recipient and at the same time supporting the business of a friend or neighbour. Many shops and galleries feature works by area creators and/or gifts that are eco-friendly. The money you spend in your community tends to circulate back into the local economy too, so you'll be contributing to a wonderful ripple effect.

We would like to thank the participating merchants for taking the time to send in their Gift Giving Guide suggestions, and to thank our readers for shopping locally and thereby supporting both the shops and our paper. We will be featuring photos of many of the items on these lists on social media and in upcoming editions of Hummail.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy holiday season!

Gifts for Coffee & Tea Lovers

- The Vodkow coffee cream gift box**, Dairy Distillery.....\$65
- Hand-crafted mugs by seasoned potters**, General Fine Craft.....\$35-60
- Double-walled coffee/tea glasses**, Good Food Co.....\$18
- The Coffee Basket**, Ottawa Valley Gift Baskets.....\$79.95
- Tea, tea cozies, tea pots, espresso maker**, Pêches & Poivre.....\$10-100



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Gift Giving Guide Shop Directory

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

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Joanne Beaton



'Tis the Season for Giving!

'Tis the season for giving, and once again our local charities and organizations are counting on our support. Many of them have not been able to do the same fundraising that they would have in the past, and are relying on the community to help out with donations.

The first Tuesday of December has become known as Giving Tuesday, following Black Friday and Cyber Monday, and it's the perfect day to make a donation to the local charities and organizations of your choice.

Ken and I have been supporting the **Almonte General Hospital Foundation** for several years now, and we feel blessed to be able to contribute to such an important cause in our community. While we have rarely made use of the hospital services ourselves, all 8 grandchildren were born there, and we take great comfort in knowing that Almonte has such an outstanding hospital for our community.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and much health and happiness in 2022!



Tracy Arnett, Realty Sales Representative
613.407.4309
joannebeaton@tracyarnett.com

See page 24 for great gifts for **HEALTH & WELLBEING**



“Winter Wonderland” Festival in Carleton Place

Carleton Junction in Carleton Place will come alive from December 10 to 12 with the sights and sounds of a Winter Wonderland! The Winter Wonderland Festival encompasses a variety of outdoor winter activities, live entertainment, music, food vendors and more. Tickets are on sale now online at Tickets Please (ticketsplease.ca or 485-6434), or in person at the Carleton Place Arena at 75 Neelin Street.

Friday's kick-off will have the crowd amazed with a fire show by Brant the FireGuy at 5:20PM, followed by a very special presentation of the 2021 Carleton Place Citizen of the Year at 6:15PM, and Carleton Place's own The Bowes Brothers will take the stage at 6:30PM. Fans are encouraged to bring their singing voices as the Bowes Brothers lead them through a festive melody of holiday songs and fan favourite tunes.

Gates open on Saturday at 1PM with a performance from Derek McKinley of Sing Song Party Time. Canadian children's entertainers Splash'N Boots take

the stage at 2PM, followed by Carleton Place's own Cait St Clair at 3:15PM and Lanark County Revivals at 4:30PM. Patrons are encouraged to stick around as JaxStraw brings the party starting at 6:30PM.


The Sunday festivities will keep patrons moving and dancing with a full day of entertainment and activities. Splash'N Boots return to the stage at 10AM, followed by Carleton Place's Amber Humby. Ottawa's Junkyard Symphony takes the stage with their interactive and energetic show at 12:20PM, and Carleton Place's Chris Mellor will wrap up with a show at 1:30PM.


Food vendors on-site include Law & Orders, Carleton Place & District Civitan Club, Mrs. Grub's Pantry, and The Gift of Food Christmas Drive volunteers. Patrons can also take part in crafts, activities, meet & greets and more! For more information on the Carleton Place Winter Wonderland Festival, please visit <cpwinterwonderland.ca>. Carleton Junction is located at 42 Moore Street.

Gifts for \$100 & Under

- The Almonte Makers gift basket, Dairy Distillery.....\$110
- Genuine leather cross-body bags in 7 colours, Judy Joannou Designs.....\$35
- Canadian cheeses, cheese gift bags & gift baskets, Pêches & Poivre.....\$10 & up
- Locally made hand-knit mittens, Strévé Design.....various







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Peggy Schenk — She's A Sketch!

Peggy Schenk is delighted that postcards are making a comeback. This Perth artist creates picture postcards that feature her whimsical hand-drawn sketches. Captured in pen and ink with watercolour accents, her sketches celebrate the beauty of the everyday mundane. From a hockey rink scene to a tangle of Christmas tree lights, her sketches warm the cockles of your heart.

by Sally Hansen

It's inevitable that as photography becomes more accessible and ubiquitous (think cell phones and incessant selfies), art produced by real live human beings will become more valued. What is it about our species that values scarcity over abundance? In the case of Peggy's sketches, it's talent augmented by humour and offbeat creativity. A photo of a front doorstep decorated for the holidays can be beautiful and/or impressive, but it usually doesn't bring a smile to your heart. Another reason for the popularity of her postcards is the way she infuses them with personality. Even her collections of vintage sewing machine and motorcycle sketches make you smile. For many art lovers, the ability of a work to evoke an emotional response is key, and Schenk intuitively knows how to tug on your heartstrings.

Architecture is her favourite subject. Heritage buildings particularly appeal to her, and their abundance is the main reason she and her husband relocated to Perth two years ago. She likes to "capture the not-so-pretty things around the building" (like power poles and lines, mechanical equipment, garbage cans near back doors...), and finds that people often comment on how much they enjoy seeing it in her artwork. She conjectures, "I guess it is because most people just walk past it and don't notice it — but there is beauty in it — everything is interesting when you draw it. I guess that is why I am asked to draw house and storefront portraits and have made a business of it. I draw what I see — not what I want to see."

Peggy creates her charming pen and ink sketches because she is very creative and needs to be making something to be happy. She was raised in "a very artsy environment," and drawing is an innate talent she has enjoyed throughout her life. After working in winery sales in Kelowna she spent many decades working as a bank teller, but grew increasingly discontented with the mounting pressure to meet sales quotas. Now retired, she is very grateful that her husband Martin, a retired chef trained in French cuisine in

Switzerland, indulges her passion for sketching by doing the cooking and much of the housework.

Peggy began her art career years ago as a self-trained folk artist working in acrylics, but describes herself as easily bored. About four years ago she decided she needed a change, and transported her skills and her passion to pen and ink sketching. Her primary medium is waterproof ink applied with her cherished German-made Lamy Safari fountain pen. Her style is loose line drawings accented by simple watercolour washes, and she believes that her casual attitude toward perspective and proportion makes her art fun and gives it its character. Her motto is: "There is beauty in imperfection and simplicity." She is definitely onto something. Her charming postcards are now carried in four Perth shops, and the response on her Etsy shop is overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

The demand for commissioned sketches of houses and storefronts has blossomed since her arrival in



Perth. They make great wedding and anniversary gifts, and cherished mementos when friends or family move to senior accommodations. She also has created commissioned postcards and cards for personal events. Surprisingly, she has enjoyed several unusual artistic achievements as the result of accidental sightings and unsolicited referrals. In 2004 an artist acquaintance asked permission to propose her folk art painting of a hockey game as the artwork for the tickets to the Junior Hockey Memorial Cup games. It was chosen, and the tickets looked great. She did a commissioned painting of the Okanagan Lake Bridge for a TV commercial for Canadian Blood Services. And next month her iconic postcard "Sardines" will appear in a scene in the upcoming movie *Swan Song* starring Mahershala Ali and Naomie Harris. Not bad publicity for a postcard sketch!



Sketching has become a way of life for Schenk. She is working on her seventh sketch book in which she chronicles her daily activities, both as a wonderful keepsake journal and as drawing practice. She much prefers drawing to writing; that is one of the main attractions of postcards. Instead of staring at a blank and intimidating piece of paper or computer screen, a postcard allows you to send a brief message and brighten a friend's day at the same time. Who wouldn't like to open

their mail slot and receive a friendly note on the back of a frameable pen and ink sketch? It also saves paper because you don't need an envelope. And as a journal, a sketch is worth a thousand words in terms of evoking a memory of a place or event.

Everywhere she goes, Peggy takes her sketchbook along. When she travels, which she can't wait to resume post-Covid safety concerns, she carries her leather-bound sketch book and a set of Faber-Castell coloured pencils. She loves the idea of creating quick caricatures rather than striving for perfection in fine art drawings because of the creative freedom it affords. It is somewhat analogous to a snapshot versus a portrait. The snapshot captures the activity and the spontaneity and the mood of the moment; it is informal rather than formal. Schenk's sketches do the same, and she is delighted that her fans tell her how much they enjoy her art and the "warm, fuzzy feelings" they elicit. So maybe instead of fine art Schenk is creating everyday, accessible, unrefined art. Bravo! The world can certainly use more warm fuzzy feelings.

The back of her Artist Trading Card at the top of this page provides coordinates to many opportunities to experience the heartwarming sketches Peggy Schenk creates to celebrate the beauty of the everyday mundane.



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WHO Peggy Schenk (aka Pegmeister Art)
WHAT Sketches in Pen, Ink and Watercolour
WHERE <etsy.com/shop/pegmeisterart>, <peggy_schenk@yahoo.com>, <facebook.com/pegmeisterart>, 200-0150; The Book Nook and Other Treasures, Perth; Mariposa Design, Perth; Perth Museum Gift Shop; Perth Pharmasave; Art Hub, Smiths Falls
WHEN Until Dec. 17 in juried art exhibit at Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum
WHY "To capture the beauty in the imperfection of the everyday mundane."

ARTIST TRADING CARD

A Memorable Christmas for Women in Need

Lanark County Interval House and Community Support (LCIHCS) is bringing back their Angel Tree campaign again this year. Much like last year, the Angel Tree is available virtually at <lcihvirtualangeltree.com>. The website allows donors to select a person to support this holiday season from the comfort of their own home. To encourage shopping local, LCIHCS has paired up with twelve local businesses to bring The Twelve Days of Christmas Giving to Lanark County. More details will follow on LCIHCS' social media!

"Our emergency shelter remains open throughout the holiday season, and we strive to make it as joyous and festive as possible," says Executive Director Erin Lee. "The pandemic continues to challenge the shelter. We have been at capacity most days and have experienced a 75% increase in crisis calls and 21% increase in youth; we anticipate we will be very busy this season."

The Angel Tree gives community members the opportunity to purchase some holiday gifts for a child, teen or woman in the community who is in need. Teens often go overlooked at this time of year, so LCIHCS is suggesting that donors consider supporting a teenager.

LCIHCS Resource Development Coordinator Cathie McOrmond explains that fundraising has continued to be a challenge this year. "Fundraising needs are more significant and necessary but also more challenging now because of Covid," McOrmond explains. "Residents often feel especially vulnerable and downhearted at this time; giving to LCIHCS means you will share in the generosity of the season and make a difference for the women and children who will call Interval House 'home' this December and beyond."

To support the Virtual Angel Tree, please go to <lcihvirtualangeltree.com> to select a recipient. Donations of new, unwrapped toys and gifts can be dropped off at the shelter location, IDA Drug Mart in Carleton Place, Shopper's Drug Mart in Smiths Falls or Barnaby's Independent Grocer in Perth through to December 10.

"Gratitude is a word I've been using more since the pandemic began — we have been blown away by the support from the community," notes Lee. "Donations to our holiday giving campaign will relieve the stress from families and mothers in need so they know Christmas will still happen and their kids will have a smile on their face on Christmas morning."

Need 'em... need 'em... got 'em...
 Clip and save the Artist Trading Card
 All the cool kids do it!



Angel Tree for Seniors

Brighten the day of a community-living senior through our **Angel Tree program.**

We will ensure local seniors receive a gift in time for Christmas.

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Cash/Cheque Payable to: ConnectWell Community Health
 (memo: Angel Tree for Seniors)
 207 Robertson Drive, Lanark, ON K0G 1K0

Any surplus funds will be redirected to provide support to seniors throughout the next calendar year.



For more information, please contact Sarah at 613-259-2372 ext.2435

Gifts for To Lift the Spirits

- Even if you don't buy a bra, Kathy has a funny story**, 8008 Lingerie..... Priceless!
- Almonte-made carbon-neutral Vodkow**, Dairy Distillery..... \$32.95
- La Luna day break light therapy lamp**, Foodsmiths..... \$69.99
- Cashmere and wool coat**, Paddy Mann Clothing..... \$2200 & up
- Candle holders by Pietersma Tinworks**, Riverguild Fine Crafts..... various
- "Three Daisies" by Jane Irwin**, Sivarulrasa Gallery..... \$320
- Variety of unique new and used books for all ages**, Spark Books & Curios..... various
- Donations in their name**, Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust..... various
- Wool cashmere cable throw blanket**, ThreadWork..... \$179
- Pearl bracelets with gemstones**, Kehla Jewellery Design..... \$350-975

Gifts for Faraway Friends

- "People & Events" coin set w/ historic trivia from any year**, Alliance Coin. \$15 & up
- Secrid wallets**, Vamos Outdoors..... \$89 & up



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Nothing Sketchy About It — Get Thee to the Theatre!

By Heather Phaneuf

There I was, ear pressed up against a wooden door in the Almonte Library listening in to a *Sketchy Santa* rehearsal — around me the sounds of a vacuum clearing up the day. I leaned in closer. What? Sure, it was a frosty night, and yes, I had my mask and gloves on, but still a chill set in. The things I heard. The marvelous, perturbing things I heard!

Don't even ask me about the power of the Clayton Rhombus... I tremble as I type this... you'll just have to buy a ticket and find out. Let me just say, it was shocking to learn that a much-beloved horticultural guru in our Valley was asked about... well. It's legal now. Pity the poor Amazon delivery guy who stumbled on the sordid story.

Something is delightfully afoot. Earlier that same week, I watched a tall, lean player stumble groggily into a local café with a well-thumbed script sticking out about a much photographed, much loved James Naismith bench on Mill Street. The sculptor, apparently a shut-in, is keen to enhance his work. You're going to want to know more about this.



What the heck is The Clayton Rhombus?!? Are people allowed to put masks on the statue of James Naismith? Come on out to *Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts* and find the hilarious answers to these and other local mysteries.

Then there's Gus working hard on a *Puppets Up!* grant application on a computer that just says no. The nerve! Thank goodness we eventually arrive at a dinner party where the gift of the grape is being liberally imbibed. Oh, and there's so much more.

Sketchy Santa is a collection of adult holiday shorts — no, you don't have to wear them, but do admire that jolly fellow in splendid boxer regalia on the poster, won't you? I wasn't really ready for the shorts. I mean, what will the elves think? Don't look — no, don't look — ok, peek.

Music will fill the Almonte Old Town Hall too — from an original song penned by maestro Rob Riendeau himself, with music (and I'm told some lyrical adjustment) by Mike McCormick of the Arrogant Worms. There's also a rant that's "worth the price of admission", an irreverent take on a handful of Mississippi Mills' iconic figures, along with the ever-effervescent Jingle Belles as they return to the stage once again. Amidst other wonderful warblers, the ghost of Elvis will be in the building too — everyone wants in!

A series of tales by an accomplished gang of locals. An unforgettable crazy quilt adroitly embroidered together by linking scenes involving Santa and his Missus, a cavalcade of puppets, and, oh yes, elves. What's not to like?!

Says director Kris Riendeau: "What surprised us the most was how this show morphed from seven stand-alone sketches into a full-length production." We're grateful it did, Kris and Rob — we've all faced the challenges of the last 19 months and really love the idea of a creative gathering once again. "This is certainly the most fun we've had all pandemic. Rehearsing in-person with masks on is still better than Zooming, and the cast has brought so much creative energy and enthusiasm to this project we can hardly believe it. It's like they were storing it up for a year-and-a-half and now it's exploding all over the stage." Yes, I suspect we've all had moments like that.

"It always amazes me how collaborative creativity can take words from a page to the stage — each cast member adds their own colour and characterization, and often even new words. That said, the script was pretty darn funny to begin with!" Well said Kris — and let's face it, if you ain't got humour and hope, well, you've just got... whatever.

Sure, sure, there was another Humm article last month on this very *Sketchy Santa*, but like any great piece of craft, the news bears repeating. These thespians are not only providing us with a rarefied look at our world... yeah, that's it... but they're also generously supporting *Puppets Up!* It's true — the colourful, joyful, rollicking mix of puppets and people from all over, will reclaim Almonte next summer from August 12–14. Haven't you missed the puppet hullabaloo since its last iteration in 2016? Sniff. I have.

Get thee to the theatre in December! Raise your hands in the air and yell "whoopie" for Humm Team Productions bringing community theatre back to the stage just when we need it most.

The theatrical mayhem will happen on five nights in December — 10, 11, 16, 17 and 18 at 7:30pm (I'm afraid the matinee on December 12 is already sold out). Tickets are \$30 dollars apiece and available through Tickets Please <ticketsplease.ca>. Don't delay — go catch some magic for the hollydaze.

Follow in Sketchy Santa's footsteps and support Puppets Up! Check out the website at <puppetsup.com>. Keen to come on board as a sponsor? Send a note to <sponsorship@puppetsup.com> and we'll discuss how you can do just that!



Warmest Holiday Wishes



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Season's Greetings



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healthy
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ABBA Revisited – The Christmas Show

ABBA Revisited is North America's #1 tribute to ABBA, and its members have been dazzling audiences across the globe since the year 2001. ABBA Revisited recreates the magic of the band with authentic costumes, spectacular harmonies and note-perfect musicianship, taking their audience on a musical journey back in time.

From Vegas to Bermuda, Mexico to Dubai, ABBA Revisited has recreated the show-stopping look and sound that fans around the world can't resist! This must-see show will be live on stage at the Gallipeau Centre Theatre in Smiths Falls on Saturday, December 11. Find tickets and more details at . Doors open at 7PM and the show begins at 8.



Catch ABBA Revisited at the Gallipeau Centre Theatre in Smiths Falls on December 11

Gifts for Local Food & Drink Lovers

- Gluten-free artisan sourdough breads, 3 Apples Bakery \$7-10.50
- Six pack with a variety of kombucha, Artizen Kombucha.....\$25
- Gift cards, Black Tartan Kitchen.....various
- The Cider Keg sparkling apple ciders, Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm.....\$8.25
- Gift cards!, Good Food Co.....various
- Chocolate salami, Hummingbird Chocolate.....\$26.99
- The Gourmet Basket, Ottawa Valley Gift Baskets.....\$84.95
- Back Forty cheese & local food gift basket, Back Forty Artisan Cheese.....\$95



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* Don definitely did not approve this ad. Good thing he's got such a great sense of humour!

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a mode of artistic expression or communication
ef-fort | \ 'e-fərt
a conscious exertion of power

Humm Bits

Christmas Artisan's Market

The Portland on the Rideau Historical Society is holding a Christmas Artisan's Market at the Emmanuel Heritage Centre, 2767 Hwy 15 in Portland, on Saturday December 4 from 10AM to 5PM.

The Society feels that it is particularly important this year to open the doors of their beautiful Emmanuel Heritage Centre (formerly Emmanuel Anglican Church) to the public again, and to celebrate the season. They will continue to follow all Covid protocols as required by Public Health.

The market features local artisans presenting a variety of wonderful items for sale. For more information, please email .

Angel Tree for Seniors

Here is an opportunity to brighten the Christmas season for community-living seniors. ConnectWell Community Health – Lanark Site is gratefully accepting monetary donations and will ensure that local seniors in need receive a gift in time for Christmas. Any surplus funds will be redirected to provide support to seniors throughout the next calendar year. To donate to ConnectWell's Angel Tree for Seniors online, please go to , then select Lanark Angel Tree for Seniors. Donations in the form of cheques are also accepted and can be made out to ConnectWell Community Health with a memo indicating "Angel Tree for Seniors". Cash or cheques can be dropped off at ConnectWell Community Health, 207 Robertson Drive in Lanark (K0G 1K0). For more information, please call Sarah at 259-2372 x2435.

Family & Child Services / OPP Angel Tree

The Angel Tree program in Lanark County is celebrating 36 years. It continues to be a success, thanks to the generosity and Christmas spirit in Lanark County and the surrounding area. This year, the Lanark County Family and Child Services and the OPP Angel Tree program are starting off with 700 angels.

The "angels," assigned to trees, represent children directly affiliated with the Lanark County Family and Child Services or other affiliated programs. The goal is to provide a Christmas gift to each child.

The Municipality of Mississippi Mills has Angel Cards available for pick-up at the Municipal office (3131 Old Perth Road) as well as the Pakenham Library Branch (128 MacFarlane Street). Gifts must be returned (preferably unwrapped, or in a gift bag) before Wednesday, December 8. If you would like to call in advance to confirm tags are available or to reserve an angel, please call 256-2064 for the Municipal Office or 624-5306 for the Pakenham Library.

Lanark County Routes

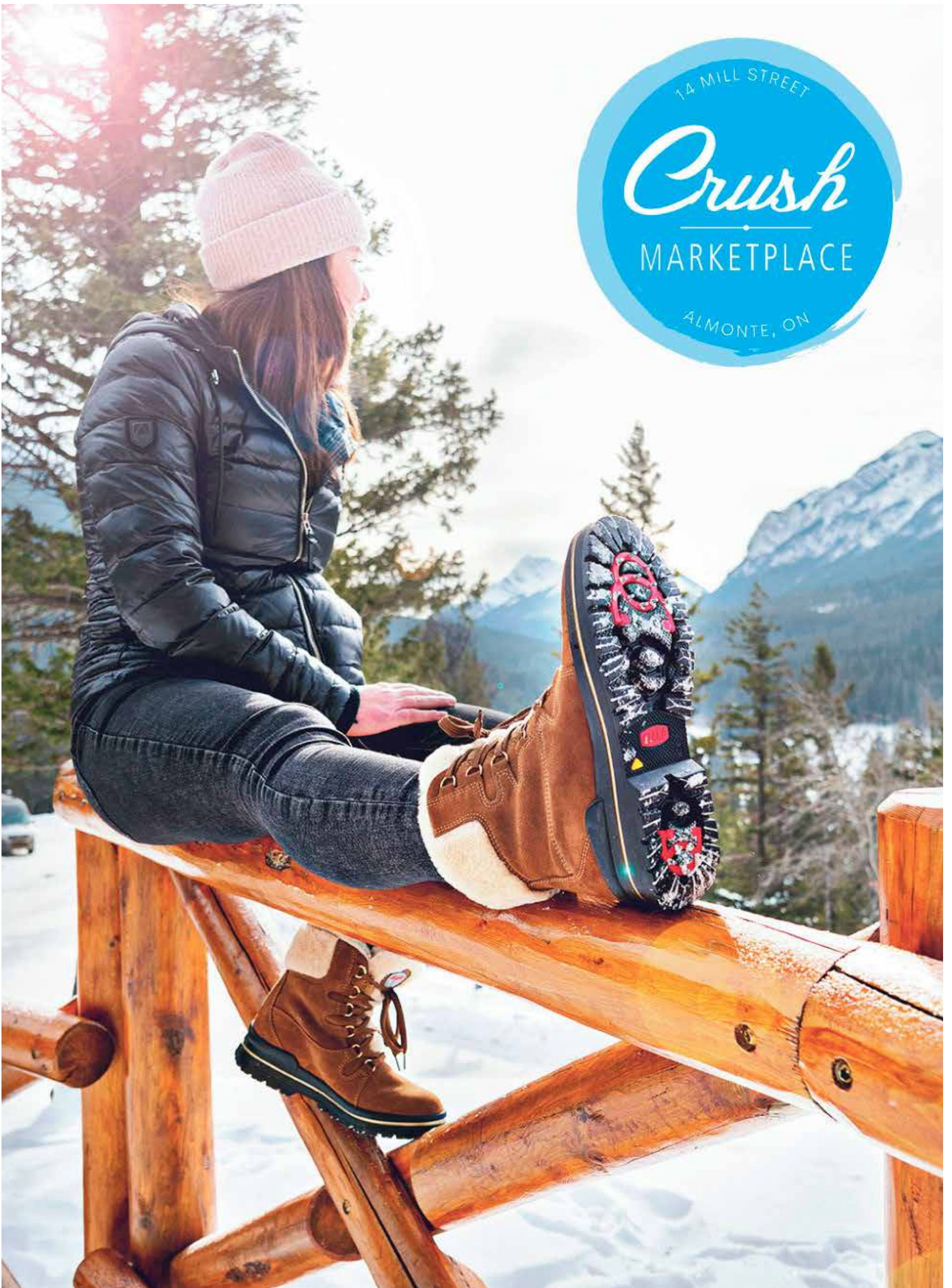
The Lanark County Genealogical Society (LCGS) is excited to present their 40th anniversary special publication — *Lanark County Routes* — a two-volume set of coffee table books. Volume 1 presents Lanark East — Pakenham and Ramsay (Mississippi Mills), Beckwith and Montague Township; and Volume 2 presents Lanark West — Lavant, Darling, North Sherbrooke, Dalhousie, Lanark, South Sherbrooke, Bathurst, Drummond, North Burgess and North Elmsley.

Each book explores the rural routes and roots of the pre-amalgamation townships of Lanark County through maps and farm histories. Maps include those with landowner names applied as well as one modern map with all the Lots and Concessions marked.

The histories of various farms in each township were submitted by both members and non-members of the Society. Many of the articles tell a brief history of the families who lived there in the early days. Where possible, the rural addresses of the farms have been identified to help people in situating where a particular Lot and Concession actually is. The volumes are designed to aid in finding where your ancestors lived.

This publication is now available at Levi Home Hardware in Almonte, CCWG Livestock Supplies & Equestrian Centre in Carleton Place, Impression Printing in Smiths Falls and in Perth, and the Lanark Era Office in Lanark Village. You can also order online through the Society website or by phone at 257-9482.

See page 23 for great gifts for
KIDS & TEENAGERS



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The Art of Gift at Strévé

“The Art of Gift” is the new show of fine art and fine craft at Strévé Design Studio Boutique and Gallery in Downtown Perth!

Consider giving gifts to your family and loved ones that are handmade, artful, made by only one person, and infused with soul and love. Every item in the main floor boutique and in the second-floor art gallery at Strévé Design is meant to be collected, cherished and then passed down to the next generation. Call this way of thinking old-fashioned and the way people used to live a few generations ago — or call it sustainable living!

Think twice before buying an item this Christmas and ask yourself: How was this item made? Was it made locally or in Canada in an environmentally-friendly manner using sustainable and high quality materials? Is the item designed well? Is the piece visually attractive and does it have one or more high quality functions? Do I really like this art piece, and can I see myself or the receiver enjoying and using it for many years to come?

If the answer is “Yes!” to the majority of these questions, then you now understand the true meaning behind The Art of Gift.



Find works by Dayle VanAlstine (above), Wendy Quirt (at left), and others at The Art of Gift in Perth

The exhibit will run into the first week of January in the loft gallery, where owner Cheryl Straby has gathered twelve Perth and Ottawa area artists together who work in such varied styles as realism, abstract, impressionism and naive art. In addition to acrylic and oil paintings, she has added free motion embroidery, hand embroidery, needle felting, photography and mosaics. The artists are Judy Miller, Margaret Martin, Karen Bell, Karen Wynne Mackay, Dayle VanAlstine, Kathryn Bossy, Fred Fowler, Wendy Quirt, Ginny Fobert, Juanita Sauve, Donna McPhail and Caroline Evans.

The main floor boutique is stocked with Cheryl's own Strévé Design artwear and ready-to-wear leather capes, coats and suede scarves. All these items are made sustainably in the studio at the back of the boutique. Complementing Cheryl's designs are hand-woven silk and wool scarves by local weavers Lise Loader, Roberta Murrant and Jean Down. Exquisite one-of-a-kind semi-precious stone and silver jewelry is by Eleanor Martin of Perth.

With all this variety and prices ranging from \$20 to \$2,000, there is something for everyone. Please visit <strevedesign.com> for more information. Happy artful gifting!



Power Up Your Life
 tools for intuitive living
Breakfast with Soul

In her memoir *From the Ashes of War*, G. Devika Eifert tells a series of stories from her life – from the terrifying traumas of a war-child in Poland during WWII, all the way to the inner peace and gratitude of an 80-year-old woman, mother and psychotherapist in Canada.

G. Devika Eifert is the guest speaker at **Breakfast with Soul**, December 15 from 9-11am.

Email powerupyourlife@gmail.com for Zoom link and more information.
www.lillywhite.ca

See page 21 for great gifts for **COOKS & GOURMETS**

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 Art-related puzzles, games and novelties, Medium Effort..... \$5-50
 WASGIJ puzzles are back in stock!, Mill Street Books..... \$25-30
 Cocktail Bombs and Food Crayons, Pêches & Poivre..... \$5-40
 Harry Potter Hogwarts; Polar Express Lionel train sets, Spark Books & Curios..... \$199
 Jigsaw puzzles for adults & kids, The Book Nook..... \$14 & up
 Season's passes to 4 concerts, Folkus Concert Series..... \$110
 Glitzy, loveable gnomes, Frangipani..... \$19.99 & up

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Giving a Gift to Last

Support MMLT and Preserve our Future

By Robert Betcher

Each holiday season, if we are lucky, we surround ourselves with the people and things we love most. A lucky few, like Paul and Cathy Keddy, awaken each day in a place that brings them wonder and joy — their forest.

The study and love of nature is a lifelong journey. Each foray into the forest can bring delightful discoveries and wonderful curiosities that send us searching for field guides and pique our desire to share with friends.

Paul and Cathy Keddy are MMLT members, ecologists, authors and experts who have studied thousands of acres of forest over their lifetime. They walk and appreciate their own lands, season to season, year to year, and look for patterns — the return of a migrant species or the appearance of flowering plants not recorded before.

Paul and Cathy have two Conservation Agreements with the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust <mmlt.ca>. They protect the Keddy Nature Sanctuary and Salamander Forest to ensure these 688 acres of precious lands are never developed. They are protected in their natural state for generations.

This is the Keddy legacy: 5,791,257 red-backed salamanders protected; 75,859 tonnes of stored carbon in forests, wetlands, and butterfly meadows; 688 acres of forest, wetland, and meadow complex safeguarded; 171 acres of Provincially Significant Wetland (42% of Scotch Corners PSW) secured; 101 bird species thrive in diverse habitats; 10 at-risk species have a sanctuary.

Altogether, the *annual* value of ecosystem services (benefits provided by ecosystems that contribute to making human life both possible and worth living) provided to us by the Keddy's legacy is estimated at \$5,705,000. That is \$8,300 per acre!

This has been another year of growth for the Land Trust, and there will be more exciting announcements coming in the New Year. Your support is important to our ongoing mission, and I hope that you will consider becoming a member and/or making a gift to help protect more land in the coming year.

However you choose to help makes a difference and is appreciated. Best wishes for a happy holiday season and a healthy 2022.

— Robert Betcher is the President of the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust



Cathy and Paul Keddy protect 688 acres known as the Keddy Nature Sanctuary and Salamander Forest. Your support can help preserve and maintain this and other Land Trust properties!

Curious & Kind Presents

On Monday, December 13, Curious & Kind presents a very special show at the Almonte Old Town Hall hosted by Danielle K.L. Greigore. It features performances by comedian Dawn Xanklin, musician Trevor Lubin and local storyteller Susan Macaulay, as well as some other special guests, a door prize draw and friendship!

Doors open 6:30PM and the show begins at 7. Tickets are \$20, available from <curiousandkindalmonte@gmail.com>, but no one will be turned away due to lack of funds. ID and proof of vaccination is required. For more information, please visit <curiousandkind.ca> or find them on Facebook.

Gifts for \$25 & Under

- Adorable mugs & giftware, 3 Apples Bakery various
- Gift basket w/ Artizen socks, iced tea & soap, Artizen Kombucha\$19.99
- Soft bamboo socks, Crush Marketplace\$15
- Red's Art resin necklaces, Foodsmiths\$17.99
- Salted caramels, Hummingbird Chocolate\$20.99
- Attic Journals — old books, new lives!, Medium Effort..... various
- Knit baby bunnies, MVTM Gift Shop\$25
- Amos pewter Christmas ornaments, Riverguild Fine Crafts\$21
- TheraBand foot roller, Thrive Chiropractic\$20
- Assorted raw sheep's milk cheese wedges, Back Forty Cheese.....\$7-17



Humm Team Productions presents

Sketchy Santa

A Collection of Holiday Shorts

A hilarious adult-themed fundraiser for Pop-Up Puppets Up!

December

10, 11, 16, 17 & 18

at 7:30 PM

December 12 Matinée **SOLD OUT!**

Almonte Old Town Hall

TICKETS PLEASE | **Tickets: \$30** FROM TICKETSPLEASE.ca

Proof of vaccination and photo ID will be required at the door

**Book & Carding Mill Press
online Christmas Card Sale!**





Browse all Christmas cards, "Cards for readers & will-be-readers" and "Almonte is too important to be taken seriously cards" at the shop. Buy local! All cards are also available at Mill Street Books, Almonte

www.bookmillpress.com/shop

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See page 24 for great gifts that are
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A Tale of Two Tales

If you're looking for wonderful local gifts for children, you can't get much more local than books written and illustrated by authors in our area. Here are two that are available right here in Lanark County!

Felicity Mouse

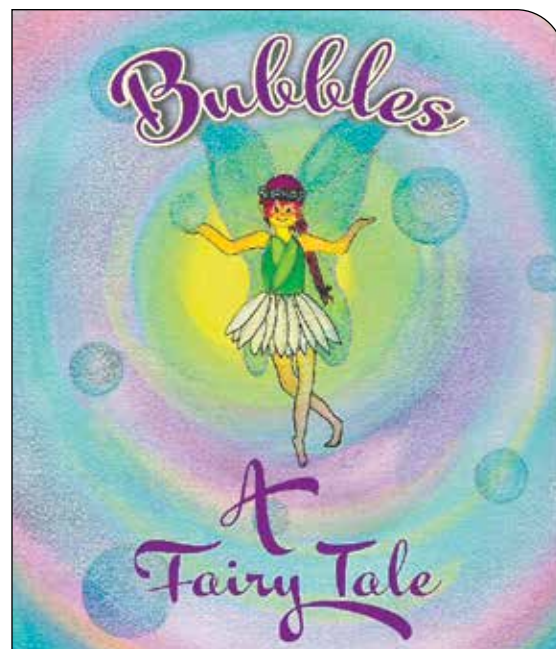
Wendy Healey has been a stay-at-home mom, a daycare worker and an Early Childhood Educator. Her first book, *Felicity Mouse and her Farmhouse Adventures*, is based on her experiences growing up in Carleton Place — specifically on Glen Isle. When her husband's career landed her in Beijing, Wendy began imagining the tales of Felicity, writing and painting about her adventures back home in Canada during a simpler time and place among the natural surroundings of the island in the Mississippi River near Appleton. She has since written two more books about Felicity (including one about Carleton Place called *Felicity Mouse and the Treasured Small Town*), as well as a story about two stray dogs called *Pickles and Parker*, which takes place in Tianjin, China.

You can order books directly from Wendy (\$25 for four books or \$15 for two) by emailing <jphealey35@hotmail.com>, or find them in the gift shop at the Carleton Place and Beckwith Heritage Museum (located at 267 Edmund in Street Carleton Place) where they sell for \$10 each.



Felicity Mouse
and her
Farmhouse Adventures

written and illustrated by Wendy Healey



Bubbles — A Fairy Tale

Bubbles — A Fairy Tale is a read-aloud story about a little fairy, an empty garden, and the magic of working together.

The book is the work of two friends from McDonalds Corners. Jan Griffiths draws on a palette of vibrant colours and her own brand of whimsy to make the story come alive and guide the young audience through an interactive adventure, inviting them to share in the joy of storytelling. "Bubbles", named for her infectious laugh, was the heroine of a bedtime story told to Lyndal Neelin by her dad. In this re-telling, written for Lyndal's granddaughters, the little fairy experiences the losses many children felt at the height of the Covid pandemic and learns about a kind of magic that involves study and trust and patience.

Lyndal and Jan enjoy working together to write and illustrate books for their grandchildren. You can find copies of *Bubbles — A Fairy Tale* at Mill Street Books in Almonte, The Book Nook in Perth and the Highlands Country Store in McDonalds Corners.

Handmade Gifts

- 100% silk designer scarf, Darrell Thomas Textiles.....\$90
- One-of-a-kind Batik tablecloth (56"x78") w/6 napkins, Fine Batiks..... \$100
- Woven mittens with spun wool, MVTM Gift Shop.....\$45
- Cosy merino wool tunic sweater, Paddy Mann Clothing.....\$950
- Crocheted items by The Knotty Doghouse, The Queen's Crafters.....\$5 & up
- Handcrafted cheese board with cheeses & charcuterie, Back Forty Cheese.....\$110
- Locally made hand-woven silk and wool scarves, Strévé Design.....\$120-150
- Meraki wooden earrings, ThreadWork.....\$18



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A Creative New Spark in Perth

One of the best parts of running an arts paper in these parts is getting to know the creative movers and shakers in our community. Over the years, theHumm has written about several different initiatives undertaken by Heidi Stepanek and Peter Dixon — including the Orion Theatre Company (whose production of *The Rocky Horror Show* blew

by Kris Riendeau

our minds and made us life-long fans) and the Perth Academy of Musical Theatre (PAMT — more recently known as the Academy for Musical Theatre). So we were delighted to hear that they have landed back in Perth, this time in the building that formerly housed The Book Worm. We caught up with them to learn more about their latest endeavour: Spark books & curios.

theHumm: After years of swimming in musical and theatrical waters, what made you decide to open a physical store?

Heidi and Peter: We thought we'd come back to dry land... It's been a few years since we've been rooted in one location, and with the loss of live theatre this past couple of years, we've been yearning to be around people again, and the timing seemed appropriate while the Academy is waiting for a post-Covid resurgence (next summer!).

When the opportunity to purchase The Bookworm building came along, it "sparked" a couple of things for us. We have often played with the idea of having a book-

store — all three of us being avid readers and book collectors — and, also, we've wanted to create some kind of space that would inspire people, spark their imaginations, help them remember the joys of childhood play. Walt Disney started out with a similar mission, and we have learned a lot from his example. He believed that children shouldn't have all the fun.

Spark seems to be a real family undertaking. How are each of you contributing to the vibe?

Great question! We haven't worked together on a creative project since the halcyon days of Orion Theatre, and we've rediscovered how well we work together as a team — naturally falling into complementary roles that best suit the two of us. Having Skye's creative energy and ideas in the mix has made us an even stronger team. We "three peas in a pod" have traveled, homeschooled, and creatively inspired each other for the past 13 years.

Skye's love of books, of stories, and her own writing makes this a perfect fit. She loves helping adults and children discover new works. All three of us are loving curating the store, and each has diverse creative interests to add to each section.

I understand that you will be continuing The Book Worm's legacy by selling gently-perused books, but you're also bringing in more new titles and some other intriguing products. What is your overall philosophy for Spark?

We want people to walk in the door and immediately feel welcome, have their inter-

ests piqued and their curiosities stimulated, have an adventure, and leave with a smile on their faces and a warm feeling in their hearts. Sound like a lot? Well, we've always been in the experience business, and we bring the same intentions to Spark. We love people, love hearing their stories, sharing experiences, interests, creating connections, and making new friends.

As we mentioned earlier, we hope to be able to spark the imaginations of everyone, and to promote a sense of adventure and play — particularly for us poor adults who often seem to be left out of the fun picture when it comes to gift giving. Which is why we've brought in things like the marvelous build-it-yourself wooden mechanical models and tiny rooms, and graphic novels for older youth and adults. And new books — lots of them — carefully curated to excite, inspire and educate (adding in exciting new fiction, more philosophy, poetry, inspirational works, French titles, etc.).

How has the reception been so far?

The reception has been incredible — welcoming, supportive, encouraging. We couldn't ask to be in a better community, and we love being part of the downtown core energy. Our aim is to carefully position ourselves in the business community as partners more than as competitors.

We've had nothing but glowing reviews from patrons — both long-time Bookworm customers who are relieved that their much-loved bookstore is still operating, and new patrons who've discovered that we are now much more than a "used books" store and



Heidi Stepanek (left), Peter Dixon and their daughter Skye are the happy new owners of Spark books & curios in Perth!

are excited about the new things we've brought into the shop.

After you make it through the holiday rush, do you have any plans to expand your mandate?

Yes, we have lots of possibilities whirling about in our brains — readings, workshops, small house concerts and other in-house events, and we would love to help in eventually developing Perth's very own Writer's Festival. One thing that can be depended on is that we will never stop recreating ourselves.

Find Spark books & curios on Facebook or at <sparkperth.ca>, or contact them by email <spark.perth@gmail.com> or phone (466-0555).

The "Almonte Friendship Series" is a collection of four Vodkow cream liquors: classic, maple, chocolate and coffee. Each features ingredients crafted by fellow artisans from our home town of Almonte, Ontario.

Available in limited quantities at your local LCBO, our distillery and www.vodkow.com

Rock, Gravel & Sand

Displaced

The rain is pelting down — splashing, seeping, excavating, and running through the soil around my home. Rain-made rivulets, originating atop the hill in the gravel road I live next to, weave small watersheds that wiggle downhill, becoming jagged channels that wind into even bigger canyons carved from the soft sediments of the road's shoulder. Following the path of least resistance, the flow curves down our laneway — a tumbling migration of water and accumulated debris — bending around the house and spilling into the pond.

by Susie Osler

I live in the western part of Lanark County. Our house is held within a bowl of rock and sand. To the west through the kitchen window, and beyond the tributaries being formed by the deluge outside, I can see a south-facing slab of bald granite so familiar to me now that its presence is often overlooked.

What would it take to collectively extract ourselves from extraction? It seems as though doing as little as possible, as often as possible, is at least a partial antidote.

This rock slope articulates the north side of an old pit — its scraped, hollowed remains are what is left after a history of extraction. The Depression-era make-work project that was the construction of Highway 7 from Peterborough to Perth required an abundance of locally sourced sand and gravel. Many farm families barely subsisting here abandoned their efforts to farm “soils” of sand for the more lucrative enterprise of extracting and selling it, in the service of pavement and progress.

Dismantled

Approximately sixty percent of the Earth's crust is composed of silica in one form or other. Its durability helps to make a tough, impervious surface when locked within rock such as granite, quartz and gneiss. Here, glaciers excavated and scoured the landscape, leaving large deposits of sand between outcrops of this ancient rock.

Sand's value lies in the seemingly limitless applications of its use in human exploits. Without silica, the infrastructure for modern life as we

know it — the buildings we live and work in, the roads we travel on, the dishes we eat from, the screens we type on and look at (to name but a few of the most obvious examples) — would not exist. Disassembling the Earth, refining, and reassembling its parts in novel ways has been the relentless endeavour of our history of engagement with progress. And yet, as we've myopically focused on manufacturing the human systems and structures we now depend on, and the wealth such systems accrue, the Earth's crust is being dismantled to death — at a truly alarming rate. How is this defensible? We are in an era of peak silica, peak oil, peak water, and perhaps also peak pleasure, yet China (only one example of many) now consumes more sand every three years to make concrete than the US consumed in the entire 20th century.

Try as I might, it seems impossible to imagine how I could extricate myself from this entangled web of dependency. I depend on many materials — clay and silica to start with — for the fabrication of my pots and sculptures. Minerals are mined across the world for paint pigments and glaze ingredients which I use. I drive on roads, still dream of flight paths, use the internet, type on computers, use a “smart” phone, live in a house with windows... and on it goes. What would it take to collectively extract ourselves from extraction? It seems as though doing as little as possible, as often as possible, is at least a partial antidote.

Archaeology

Tomorrow, after the deluge of today ends, the barnyard will predictably present me with an assembly of unearthened relics from the relatively recent past



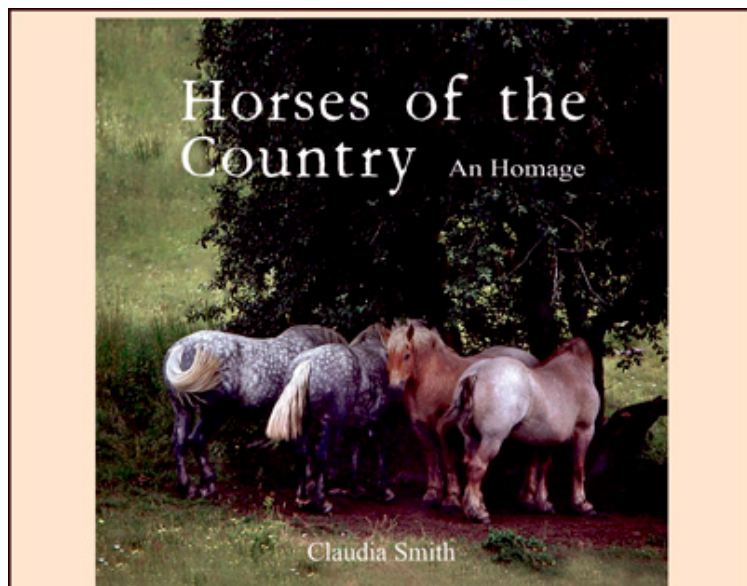
of this place. A pig femur, rubber sole, flakes of machinery, ceramic shards, glass, a tartan sleeve and other flotsam may surface out of an excavation conducted by rain.

What will the geology of this place reveal 100 or 10,000 years hence? I discover new settler-sized middens; almost one a year. The land is peppered with them — lichen-covered stone piles, rusting family dumps, car cemeteries, pet burials. The sediments laid down during my brief existence here are likely to be an even deeper and more disparate jumble of random bits — objects, soils, minerals, bones, building materials, clay — extracted, displaced, refined, assembled and imported from places entirely unrelated to here — tchotchke from travels, chemical compounds, genetic strands, soils, flora and fauna. What will the sediments of our times have to say in another millennium?

Regeneration

I woke up this morning dreaming of a bull elephant shaking the fence surrounding my garden. Eventually, I realized he was after the remnants of his ancestors — a small pile of bones partially unearthened in the garden that I had not previously noticed. He needed to retrieve them, and attend to them properly, with the honour and reverence they deserved.

Truths are being unearthened. Pulled blinking into the light, the unchallenged hymns of our times are eroding like glacier-scoured stone, releasing — layer by layer — its clinging particulate. As these old bonds break, perhaps something truly novel may be conjured from the crucible we are in. Something wiser, life-serving, reconnecting, regenerative, whole and — perhaps — novel. Something wizened in our bones is seeking hydration. It is time to sit with your people in the belly of the pit — our collective excavations — and begin to speak truth together. Awaken the embers under the cauldron, and begin concocting the elixir we need for these times.



New release by Claudia Smith, popular local historian

The hoofbeats of rural history come alive in this comprehensive account of the horses that served farm and village life — a horse-blanket of folklore, feisty horses, parades, fairs and pranks.

With over 200 vintage and colour photographs.

Book Signings:

Middleville Community Centre: Sat Dec 4, 2:00 to 4:00

**MERA Schoolhouse, McDonald's Corners:
Sun Dec 5, 2:00 (talk followed by book signing)**

Available at Mill Street Books in Almonte,
The Book Nook in Perth and White Pine Books in Arnprior

Order now in time for Christmas
<https://claudiasmith.ca>

Gifts for Art Lovers

- Hand-sculpted clay lamps & wall plaques by Richard Gill, Bittersweet**\$100-875
- One-of-a-kind Batik cloth from Madura, Indonesia, Fine Batiks**\$90
- Paintings & ceramic art by outstanding makers, General Fine Craft**\$175 & up
- Handmade Beam watercolour paints, Medium Effort**..... \$12.50 & up
- Framed works by Darion Lajoie, MVTM Gift Shop**.....\$225
- Etchings and watercolours by Franc Van Oort, Riverguild Fine Crafts**.....\$70 & up
- Gallery gift certificates, Sivarulrasa Gallery**.....\$100
- Locally painted weird whale canvases, Curious & Kind**.....\$25-600
- Impressionists' designs texting gloves, Frangipani**.....\$19.99
- Works by local artists in all styles, Strévé Design**.....various



Give the Gift of Nature

In a year that has highlighted both our need for nature and the very real impact we have on the environment, a meaningful approach to gift giving this holiday season includes all things nature-related.

It is the perfect year to allow values to lead the way in our traditions. That can include shopping for products that are sustainable

by Vickie Walsh

and made from recycled or eco-friendly material. It can mean prioritizing local and Canadian stores. More businesses, such as mine <girlgonegood.com>, donate proceeds to charity or offset their carbon footprint by donating to tree planting projects. Perhaps consider swapping out gift giving all together and focusing on experiences and time with loved ones. No matter which route you take, there is always a way to work in a more meaningful approach to showing we care during the holidays.

To help you along the way, and to inspire some gift ideas, I've listed my top recommendations for anyone who loves the outdoors, and hiking, as much as I do.

Gifts in Support of Nature

- Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust donation
- Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority annual pass
- Tree Canada gift certificate or join the National Greening Program

- Wild Roots Forest School donation (and receive their sustainable t-shirt)

Gifts for Hikers & Nature Lovers

- Medical kits by Wild Med Kits
- Patagonia lightweight fleece pullover or buff available at Vamos Outdoors
- Quick dry travel towel made from 100% recycled materials by Wanderlight
- Guide to Hiking Trails in Ottawa and Region by GirlGoneGood
- Toques, t-shirts, and YETI tumblers by GirlGoneGood
- Little Hikers Club plant press, trail diary, snap back hat, activity book by GirlGoneGood
- Coffee by Mighty Valley Coffee and powdered oat milk by Magic Oats
- *We All Go Back to the Land* by Suzanne Keetwo, available at Mill Street Books
- Durable metal Medical Emergency Card or Animal Tracking Tool by The Silver Shingle
- Post-hike sustainable clothing by TenTree or Blondie Apparel
- Headlamps, emergency whistle, microspikes and trekking poles

Top Gifts of Outdoor Experiences

- Secret daytrip road trip by Guess Where Trips
- Cabin stays at Pine Brae Wilderness Escape or Deacon Escarpment CCT
- Challenges that support causes by The Good Challenge



Top High-end Gifts for Hikers

- Garmin inReach mini satellite communicator available at MEC
- Parka, fleece or trousers by Fjällräven Ottawa

Looking for great gear for less? Try shopping online at The Last Hunt <thelasthunt.com> for previous season products from the Canadian outdoor store Atmosphere. Also, kindly consider paying-it-forward this season by donating gently used outdoor clothing and equipment to the Ottawa Outdoor Gear Library.

The best part about these gifts is that they create positive impact, either for those receiving them (like the hiker safety items) or the environment (like the donations or recycled products). They allow us to feel great about our choices in gift giving!

And if you don't see anything that suits you, or gift giving doesn't quite feel right for you, try opting out of the holiday practice and replacing it with a new tradition — like an annual winter hike, snowshoeing, outdoor scavenger hunts, boardgames, etc.

I remember one year, someone asked where my Christmas gift was for the kids. Without skipped a beat, my little niece piped in and said: "we know you don't give gifts Aunt V, you take us places instead." She was smiling and happily went off to play. My gift to the kids was my time, and sharing adventures in nature with them. We've spent all day outdoors, gone on big hikes, jumped in lakes, and stayed in treehouses. It works for us. As the famous Thich Nhat Hanh quote says: "If you love someone, the greatest gift you can give them is your presence."



Downtown

Almonte is a destination for shoppers seeking traditional gifts as well as unusual and well-curated one-of-a-kind finds. Our local shops, restaurants and services offer a wonderful experience like no other.

Browse indoors and out from 5-8pm on Thursday, December 9 at the **Downtown Holiday Night Market**

when Mill Street will be bursting with holiday spirit and sparkle. You'll find special events, food offerings, warming stations, and your favourite shops chock-full of inspiration for top-notch holiday gift giving.

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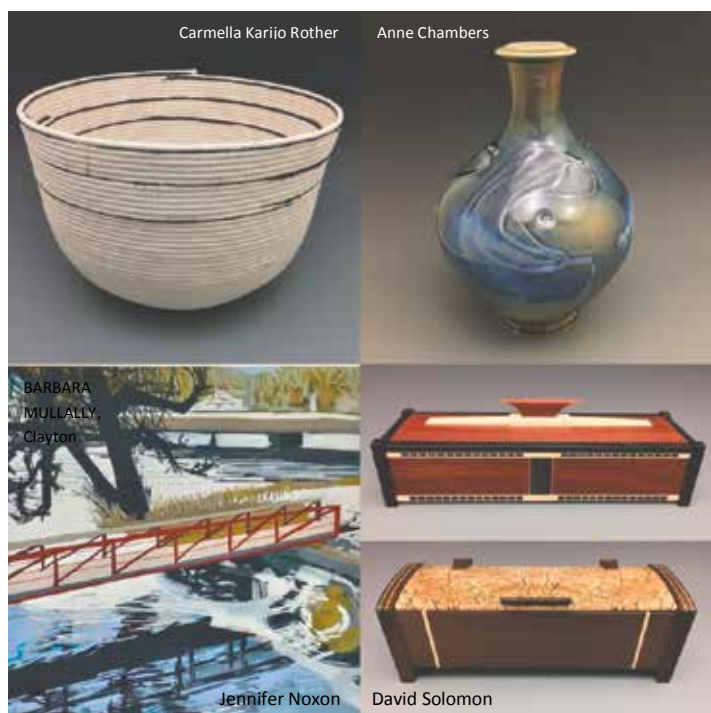
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Folkus is Back!

Full Season of Concerts Planned for 2022

By Sandy Irvin

It's been a minute, as the kids say. After shutting down partway through our last season and missing a full year, it's been over 600 days since Folkus held a concert or even a sound check indoors at the Almonte Old Town Hall. We miss you, and we miss having live concerts. With the recent provincial announcement about concert venues, it looks as though we can indeed hold a series this winter. And we are so glad to be back!

It will be still Folkus, but things will necessarily be a little different.

Tickets will be sold through our new ticketing partner, Tickets Please <folkus.ticketsplease.ca>. Numbers will be limited to 150 per show, and everyone attending must show proof of vaccination at the door, no exceptions. Masks will also be a factor; please don't leave yours at home. As things stand, we will not be serving beverages at our concerts this year. This may change, but safety is a moving target.

Our lineup this year is a bit like a wedding: something old, something new, something delicate, and something blue. We're bringing back the artists who couldn't play for us in our last season, and livening things up with a few new artists as well.



Almonte's Folkus Concert Series is delighted to present their 2022 season. It features a few performers whose shows were cancelled in 2020, and some new names.

Julian Taylor (pictured here) comes to town on March 26!

The Pairs & Tragedy Ann

We really wanted to put these two bands on our stage because they absolutely love to sing, and they are sure to bring a delightful energy to this double bill on January 29.

Tragedy Ann are based in Guelph. With intimacy and care, Liv Cazzola and Braden Phelan favour a flashlight over a spotlight in songs for community, nature, and hardworking hospital staff. Braiding organic vocal harmonies with accordion, singing saw, guitars and ukulele, Tragedy Ann's arrangements are as delicate as they are driving.

The Pairs are a joyous and energetic female-fronted folk/pop group hailing from London, Ontario. Led by the powerhouse (classically trained) vocals of Renee and Noelle Coughlin and Hillary Watson, they are backed by recovering punk drummer Steve Plimmer. The Pairs create acoustic harmony pop tunes grounded in unique rhythms that will hug your eardrums and inspire you to dance.

Shawna Caspi with Amanda Lowe W

Coming to town on February 26, Shawna Caspi is a singer, poet, painter and fingerstyle guitarist. Blessed with a warm supple voice, and mistress of fingerstyle guitar thanks to hundreds of hours of practice, Caspi is known for her incisive, clever songwriting and warm presence on stage. A connector of curious

humans, Caspi spent years on the road playing solo shows at festivals and in concert halls, train cars, backyards and living rooms, drawing energy from shifting landscapes and long drives through Canada and the United States. She returns with her fifth album, *Hurricane Coming*, a collection of raw, deeply personal songs set against a backdrop of colourful cinematic soundscapes. Shawna also created a series of abstract paintings inspired by the songs on the album, seamlessly combining her work as a musician and visual artist.

Opening for Shawna Caspi will be Amanda Lowe Warnakulasuriya. Born in Sri Lanka, raised on Prince Edward Island and now residing in Ottawa, this multilingual singer-songwriter creates a strong stage presence with her clear voice, ringing guitar and a dash of reverb.

Julian Taylor with Catriona Sturton

Julian Taylor is a songwriter at the top of his game, garnering a recent CFMA Solo Artist of the year and a Polaris Prize nomination for 2021. *The Ridge*, his latest recording, is a tender and heartfelt exploration of childhood and family that finds the artist

at his most reflective. Taylor is an artist who defies genre, but this latest recording takes us back to his roots, evoking his childhood soundtrack of Lightfoot, The Band, and his grandfather's classic country records, while being true to his own path as leader of multiple bands. Of West Indian and Mohawk descent, Taylor first made his name as frontman of Staggered Crossing in the early 2000s. These days, however, the soulful singer/guitarist might be on stage one night playing with his eponymous band, spilling out electrified rhythm and blues glory, and the next he is at a folk festival delivering a captivating solo singer-songwriter set. In everything he does, Taylor has carved his own path, creating genre-free music

with a generosity of spirit and a strong belief in the healing powers of song. We are lucky to bring him to town on March 26 for such an intimate performance.

Opener Catriona Sturton is a multi-instrumentalist tour de force, bringing a sometimes tender, sometimes comic sensibility to her songs about mysteries, the blues, cats and late night calls.

Ian Sherwood with Evangeline Gentle

Ian Sherwood is a singer-songwriter, storyteller and multi-multi-instrumentalist. He is charming in person and funny as heck on stage between songs. "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." He will take the Folkus stage on April 30.

Opening for Ian Sherwood will be Evangeline Gentle, a rising star from Peterborough. Evangeline brings a stunning voice and introspective songwriting to the stage. Their self-titled LP was recorded just down the road at Jim Bryson's Fixed Hinge Studios.

Season's passes are on sale at <ticketsplease.ca>. \$110 gets you all four amazing shows! Find more details at <folkusalmonte.com>.

Learning in Almonte is Closing the Door

By Glenda Jones

After careful consideration, the organizers of Learning in Almonte are turning out the lights in our classroom. Various circumstances besides the pandemic have made it difficult to continue.

When Don Wiles conceived this programme in 2008, little did he know the wide range of topics it would attract. For eleven years, these lectures have entertained and educated nearly 1000 participants in courses ranging from astrophysics to the history of horses. Professors from every discipline have shared their expertise with a lively group of mostly seniors eager to learn and question. What more could anyone ask that to sit through an engaging lecture and not have to write a term paper?!

However, mitigating events have intervened. Claire ApSimon, one of the three original organizers, died in March 2020, and since then other situations have arisen, making a return to our lectures impossible. We don't know the status of the library accommodation; we couldn't establish a schedule or venue; and finding lecturers to commit to all the uncertainty has proved more than challenging.

Perhaps in the future there will be the impetus to review our decision, but for the foreseeable future we will not be hosting our very popular lectures series.

We are extremely grateful for the community's constant interest in our programming. Further, we were able to donate money to many local cultural causes, all of which have acknowledged the contributions.

Should anyone decide they would like to turn the lights back on, please contact us and we will be happy to share the information to restart the program. In the meantime, the monthly Almonte Lectures series <almontelectures.net> is ably filling the gap left by Learning in Almonte.

Marny McCook, Glenda Jones, and Mel Turner would like to thank everyone for their dedication over the years.

Blues On The Rideau Still on Hold

James Doran, the dynamic organizer of the amazing Blues On The Rideau (BOTR) concert series at the Cove Inn in Westport, has had to delay the reboot of his series once again. James writes: "I have had to put the BOTR dinner & show fundraiser series on hold again until further notice. When we got the news from the Ontario government last month that full capacity and dancing (with masks) was once again being allowed, I decided to try and get the series restarted beginning in January and hopefully running right through to the spring. However, Covid numbers have started to climb again, and last Thursday we got a memo from the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit stating that establishments with dancing — in addition to requiring proof of double vaccination to enter and the need to wear masks (which I can certainly live with) — are now also

restricted to 25% capacity with 2-meter distancing between tables. There is no way I can make BOTR work at 25% capacity. I need at least 80% just to break even."

Since 2006 when the series first started, BOTR has raised over \$80,000 for local charitable causes. That's in addition to providing great gigs for blues musicians from across the country, and providing an amazing night of dancing and dining to countless patrons. Fortunately for live music lovers, the Cove Inn <coveinn.com> will continue to provide "sit and listen" live music in the interim. James adds that: "I wish the Cove good luck with this and will do what I can to help publicize their shows until BOTR can return. Let's hope for a better year in 2022."

Keep an eye on <bluesontherideau.ca> for further updates. Here's hoping for more Blues skies soon!

Gifts for Outdoor Enthusiasts

- Landscapes by Kathy Haycoj, birds by Cheryl Babineau, Bittersweet.....\$95-1100
- Handknitted wool toques with fur pompoms, Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm.....\$48
- OLANG winter hiking boots with cleats, Crush Marketplace.....\$270
- Flower stud earrings in rose and white gold, Kehla Jewellery Design.....\$900
- Field Guides: wildflowers, night sky, birds and more, The Book Nook.....\$795
- Saute Mouton winter boots, made in Canada, Vamos Outdoors.....\$300-390
- Watuko bamboo fleece headgear, Dragonfly Boutique.....\$19.99
- Donations in their name, Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust.....various
- Mount Pakenham beanie, Mount Pakenham.....\$30
- Arcade belts, ThreadWork.....\$35



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Special thanks to the Almonte Civitan Club & the Mississippi Mills Fire Department for helping make these events possible!

At Saturday's parade the Pakenham Civitan Club will be collecting for the Food Bank. Sunday the Almonte Scouts will be collecting for the Lions Club Christmas Basket program.

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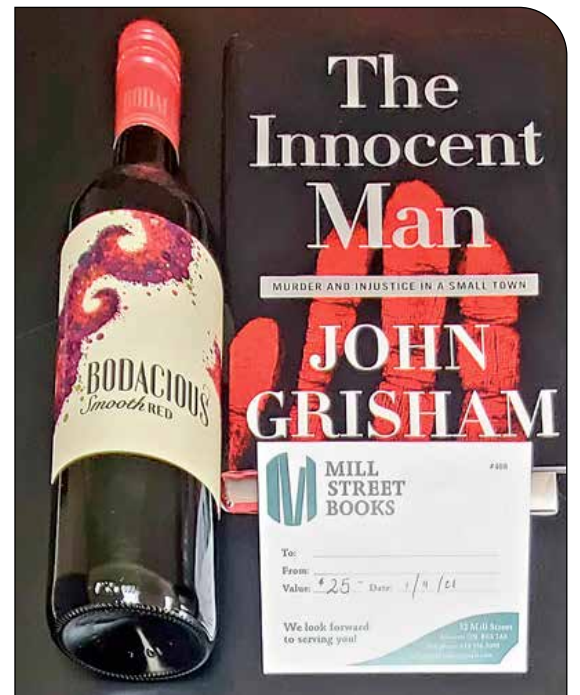
Feeding Hope Together

By Claire Marson

Towards the end of the summer, at St. Paul's in picturesque Almonte, we spent a lot of time at parish council meetings struggling with whether or not to put on our annual Harvest Supper. Each year, many meals and a portion of the ticket sales from the Harvest Supper went to the Lanark County Food Bank and those struggling with food security as well as to those at Interval House, an emergency shelter for women and children fleeing domestic violence.

Other churches and organizations were starting to find ways to serve food and raise money with volunteer-driven take-out projects. But the task seemed daunting for us with many vulnerable seniors amongst our core of volunteers. We also debated whether the Health Unit would even allow us to make and sell our tourtières, another very popular local November fundraiser that often saw line-ups down the street. Nevertheless, we were determined not to let Covid stop us from supporting others deeply affected by this pandemic, those struggling with so many challenges including mental illness, addiction and homelessness — all the ministries St. Paul's has supported in many ways, for many years.

This is how the **Feeding Hope Together** silent auction community fundraiser came to be. Running online from December 3 to 13, all the proceeds will benefit the Lanark County Food Bank, Lanark County Interval House and the Community Ministries of Ottawa (which include Cornerstone Housing for Women, The Well, Centre 454, St. Luke's Table and Ottawa Pastoral Counselling). There will be close to sixty different lots to bid on and we hope that Christmas shopping will be a strong motivator along with supporting these vital organizations. There will be something for everyone, including St. Paul's famous



Here's just one of the many wonderful lots to bid on in the Feeding Hope Together auction

tourtières, pet baskets, fashion and fun packages, as well as gift cards from local businesses, restaurants and places like Home Depot. For those feeling especially generous, there will be an option on each page to donate directly to Feeding Hope Together.

We have been blown away by the support from individuals and local businesses across the region. We may not be able to feed people in the same way as we have in the past, but we are committed to Feeding Hope Together! To bid, please go to 32auctions.com/FHT2021.

Gifts for Husbands & Significant Others

- Lanark Sheepskin slippers, Riverguild Fine Crafts.....\$95
- Glerup slippers, Vamos Outdoors.....\$99
- BN3TH underwear, Dragonfly Boutique.....\$35
- Season's passes to 4 concerts, Folkus Concert Series.....\$110
- Matching bra and panty set that is comfortable AND sexy, 8008 Lingerie.....\$200
- Sports jerseys and memorabilia, Almonte Antiques & Collectibles.....\$5 & up
- Sterling silver maple leaf lapel w/ ruby set in gold, Kehla Jewellery Design.....\$350



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“Just In Time” Studio Sale

On Saturday, December 11, everyone is invited to a wee day-long, open hearted, open-doored offering of nourishing goods for the soul. This special studio sale will feature an eclectic assortment of ceramics and drawings from Susie Osler, hip handmade leather goods from Willa Murray Design, and a host of nourishing herbal products from Clarendon Herbals. 5% of sales will be donated to a local Indigenous-led organization or project.

This pop-up sale will take place from 11AM to 5PM at 2501 Old Brooke Road (near Maberly). Find more details at <susieosler.com>. Please wear a mask and respect physical distancing.



Find ceramics by Susie Osler, leather by Willa Murray, and Clarendon Herbals on December 11

Gifts for Lovers of Sweet Treats

- Gluten-free pastries and treats, 3 Apples Bakery\$3 & up
- The Vodkow chocolate cream gift box, Dairy Distillery\$65
- Candy cane bark, Hummingbird Chocolate\$9.99
- “Just Chocolates”, Ottawa Valley Gift Baskets.....\$80.95
- Fancy advent calendars from La boîte à bonbons, Curious & Kind.....\$50.39

Gifts for Do-It-Yourselfers

- Gutermann 26-piece thread box, Darrell Thomas Textiles\$39.99
- DIY miniature room kit with LED lighting, Spark Books & Curios.....\$25-65
- Gift certificate for an improv workshop in Almonte, Curious & Kind.....\$25-100
- Night season pass, Mount Pakenham.....\$249
- AG Haircare midnight heat flat iron, Static Salon.....\$99

Gifts for Cooks & Gourmets

- Fun tableware and kitchen gifts for cooks, 3 Apples Bakery\$5.99 & up
- 4- and 7-course tasting menus w/ wine pairings, Black Tartan Kitchen...\$109 & 154
- One-of-a-kind Batik wooden salad bowls, Fine Batiks.....\$55-75
- “Gastro Obscura: A Food Adventurer’s Guide”, Mill Street Books\$30
- Exotic spices gift sets and exquisite olive oils, Pêches & Poivre\$30-80

Gifts for Over \$100

- Elna 550 sewing machine, Darrell Thomas Textiles\$849.99
- 2-piece and 3-piece cozy loungewear sets, Judy Joannou Designs.....\$139-158
- Locally-made silk scarves, MVTM Gift Shop\$125
- Facial rejuvenation acupuncture, Thrive Chiropractic.....\$160



**See page 10 for great gifts
TO DIVERT & ENTERTAIN**



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Holiday Maker's Market at North Folk Café

For three weekends in December, incredible local makers, bakers and artists will come together for an annual Holiday Maker's Market at North Folk Café in Perth. This free event is happening on December 3-5, 10-12, and 17-19.

Dasha, the owner of North Folk Café and organizer of the Maker's Market, wanted to create a relaxed shopping atmosphere for customers and take pressure off the makers' shoulders to have to "man their booth". The market's format is a fun pop-up with booths set up like a shop showcasing incredible local talent! "The Holiday Maker's Market at North Folk Café started as a way to pivot in 2020, and was so well received that we knew we had to run it again in 2021," explains Dasha.

Besides supporting local food, art and craft, every purchase gets entered in the Shop, Stamp and Win draw — with prizes like \$300, \$200 or \$100 in BIA gift certificates, a stay at the Best Western Hotel, and bonus prizes from downtown businesses.

For more information, check out @northfolkcafe on Instagram or Facebook, call 201-3139 or email <northfolkcafe@gmail.com>. See you at the market!



Come to North Folk Café on three weekends in December for their Maker's Market!

Gifts for Funky People

- Bamboo PJ's, lounge wear and cute outfit to wear out**, 8008 Lingerie..... \$80-120
- Swiss Valcambi 1 gram pure silver bar**, Alliance Coin & Banknote.....\$4
- Vinyl records**, Almonte Antiques & Collectibles.....\$5-25
- Artizen Kombucha socks**, Artizen Kombucha.....\$12
- Gnomes of all shapes and sizes**, Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm.....\$7-52
- Colourful, unique fine craft and art to be amazed by**, General Fine Craft.....various
- Art print and colourful gloves for women**, Judy Joannou Designs.....\$20
- Art History Heroes — action figures for artists**, Medium Effort.....\$40
- A great selection of graphic novels**, Mill Street Books.....\$15-40
- Waxed cotton raincoat**, Paddy Mann Clothing.....\$1600
- "Night Bus" by William Liao**, Sivarulrasa Gallery.....\$890
- Unique wooden model kits**, Spark Books & Curios.....\$20-145
- Socks! DC, Marvel, Harry Potter and more**, The Book Nook.....\$11.99 & up
- Fat bottom mugs with sayings (and free hot chocolate)**, Frangipani.....\$12.99
- Giftologie Mother Cuffer bracelet**, Static Salon.....\$2

Gifts for Wives & Significant Others

- \$100 gift certificate (for \$80!)**, 8008 Lingerie.....\$80
- Jewellery by Anne Marie Chagnon & Claudine Moncion**, Bittersweet.....\$30-200
- Wanakome hoodies**, Crush Marketplace.....\$120-154
- Sumptuous, soft, silk Batik scarves**, Fine Batiks.....\$35-75
- Hand-felted wool and chiffon scarves**, Judy Joannou Designs.....\$135
- Made-to-measure blouse**, Paddy Mann Clothing.....\$690
- Season's passes to 4 concerts**, Folkus Concert Series.....\$110
- Champagne waterfall necklace**, Static Salon.....\$30
- Gift certificate for custom leather handmade jacket**, Strévé Design.....\$695 & up



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Dear Mississippi Mills,

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Thank you for your ongoing support!

— Mississippi Mills Public Library Board and staff

The Holiday Magic Continues in Perth

As the holidays approach, the festive celebrations continue in Perth. Perth Tourism welcomes you to experience the magic that our charming town has to offer, and to explore the numerous events taking place during the Christmas season.

As you wander the streets checking off your holiday shopping list, you might encounter The Grinch or Santa and his elves, all of whom will be making appearances as part of our event series called **Weekends in Perth**. Precious Moments Carriages will be providing horse-drawn carriage rides as well, giving you the opportunity to experience some real old-world charm. The series takes place every weekend up to and including December 18.

Take a step back in time at the award-winning Perth Museum and enjoy **Home For The Holidays – A Matheson Family Christmas**. Wander through the Museum and take in a snapshot of how the Mathesons would have celebrated the holidays in the carefully restored home that was inhabited by the family for 90 years.

The holiday spirit truly comes to life as the sun sets, with the tree-lined streets twinkling with thousands of lights. Make your way to the Crystal Palace, which you'll find filled with decorated Christmas trees as part of the **Festival of Lights**, taking place until January 2.

Following the holidays, start the new year off fresh with the **Polar Bear Plunge**. At this annual event held on January 1, participants jump into the Tay River to raise money for local charities. Currently in its 27th year, the 2022 event will support the Lanark County Community Justice organisation. For more information on holiday events and to stay up-to-date on details, please visit <perth.ca/holidayevents>.

The Bells of St. Paul's

If the thought of a long winter is hovering ominously over your consciousness and you are in search of a gentle diversion that will uplift your spirits and put the sparkle back in your shine, come on out to the Crystal Palace in Perth on December 3 at 5:30PM. Not only are you guaranteed a visual sparkle, but you will be delighted to hear the scintillating sounds of Christmas hand bells. The program is all a part of the Christmas Events in Perth to herald the beginning of the holiday season. You will be able to feel a part of the greater community and still maintain a social distance and wear a mask.

The "Bells of Saint Paul's" are excited to be playing again and will entertain audiences with a variety of Christmas selections — some classical, some modern and some religious. The performance will be staged inside, surrounded by Christmas trees that will be all lit up! If you are reminded of days gone by every time you hear sleigh bells, perhaps listening to hand bells and chimes might trigger new memories to brighten up your musical memory bank. The St. Paul's Hand Bell Choir invites one and all to come and enjoy the sounds that will warm your heart. There might even be a visit from a "Nutcracker"...



Hear "The Bells of St. Paul's" in Perth on December 3

Gifts for Kids & Teenagers

- Complete starter set of 1937-52 pennies with collector album**, Alliance Coin.... \$9.95
- Suncoatgirl water-based nail colour mini manicure set**, Dandelion Foods.... \$20.95
- Graphic novels**, The Book Nook..... \$9.99 & up
- Patagonia fleece**, Vamos Outdoors..... \$109-149
- Holiday ski or snowboard lessons**, Mount Pakenham..... \$65 & up

Gifts To Calm & Soothe

- Routine natural soy candles or solid perfume**, Dandelion Foods..... \$43.95
- La Luna scented candles**, Foodsmiths..... \$24.99-34.99
- Mexican cocoa mix**, Good Food Co..... \$2.50
- "Night Sea" by Mary Pfaff**, Sivarulrasa Gallery..... \$275
- Traumacare pain relief cream**, Thrive Chiropractic..... \$24
- Thymes Aqua Coralline body wash**, Dragonfly Boutique..... \$30.99



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Thu Dec 16 **Sue Prosser** (Folk/Rock, Carleton Place) 5-8

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Sat Dec 18 **Chris Murphy** (East Coast/Folk, Solo of **Turpin's Trail**) 5-8

Tue Dec 21 **Kent Nicholson** (Acoustic Folk/Rock, Member of **The Rain Kings**) 5-8

Thu Dec 23 **Ugly Mask + Sweater Xmas Eve Eve Jazz Night Spencer Evans Band + Dick Ready Xmas Tree Fundraiser w/ Robbie Merkley** 7-10

Fri Dec 24 CLOSED at 4pm, Dec 25 & 26 CLOSED

Mon Dec 27 **Eric Uren** (Folk/Rock, Westport) 5-8

Tue Dec 28 **Meghan Balogh + Martin Smit** (Celtic/Irish Folk, Picton) 5-8

Thu Dec 30 **Henry Norwood** (Classic Country, Westport) 6-9

Fri Dec 31 **New Year's Eve** with **Turpin's Trail** (East Coast/Folk) \$85 + HST + Gratuity Dinner + Show. 7-9, Dinner 9-1 AM Show. **Overnight Packages** Available. Call for reservations! Happy New Year!

“Have a Lanark County Christmas” Holiday Contest

The Carleton Place & District Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Smiths Falls and Perth Chambers, is launching a Think Local shopping contest to support local businesses during the holiday season.

The Think Local “Have a Lanark County Christmas” contest launches invites residents to submit their receipts for any purchases made within Lanark County between November 20 and December 24. For every \$20 in purchases submitted, one ballot (to a maximum of ten ballots per transaction) will be entered into a

contest for a chance to win three prizes worth \$500, \$300 or \$200. Multiple entries may be submitted.

Receipts can be uploaded through the Think Local website in jpeg, png or pdf format and can include purchases made at any Lanark County business including gas, groceries, Christmas gifts, food and drink etc. Prizes will include Lanark County products and services for a staycation experience close to home.

“We are encouraging residents to shop close to home this holiday season and support our local business community,” explains Jackie Kavanagh, Manager



Shop locally, submit your receipts, and be entered in a draw for three wonderful prizes!

of the Carleton Place & District Chamber of Commerce. “Every purchase counts, and this contest will provide yet another incentive for consumers to think local before making purchases this year.”

The contest closes on December 24 at 6PM and winners will be announced on January 4, 2022. Receipts can be uploaded through the Think Local website at <thinklocallanark.com>.

For more information about the Think Local project in Lanark County, please visit <thinklocallanark.com>.

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- The Lanark County Sampler**, Ottawa Valley Gift Baskets.....\$68.95
- Leather purses by Regina**, The Queen's Crafters.....\$45 & up
- Deluxe meat and cheese package**, Back Forty Artisan Cheese.....\$90
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Is it Christmas Already?

How did this happen? I've hardly got the plants put away when suddenly I hear rumblings of Christmas shopping. Not so much shopping maybe, but rather Christmas searching, since all those container ships moored mid-ocean or wherever are holding us hostage for merchandise. It's strange that the stores have stuff at all — could be it's all last year's stuff dusted off and dressed up to be new again. The thing is, being denied in-store shopping last year makes us all the

by Glenda Jones

more eager to get our hands on real live stuff, so we see it as new and exciting. However, this doesn't take into account the lure of advertising that we know was generated last summer promising us the unique new toys and gadgets that alas aren't coming our way until next summer, if at all.

So circumventing this paucity of desirables is becoming a necessity. How can you look at a four-year-old longing for a unicorn and tell her she's getting a pair of rubber boots instead? The first line of defense is a heavy sigh, one loaded with empathy for the sad state of our climate (might as well haul out the big guns), meaning that Santa has spent his entire year bogged down in a melting marsh instead of working on Santa lists. Children, we are told, are the saviours of the climate, so let's get them busy on that. The only way Santa can be helped is if all the children sympathize with him, and alter their wishes to something really practical, not unicorns and rockets.

Santa's workshop was decimated by this wretched virus as well, and getting all those elves vaccinated was a real trial for him. He's doing his best to get organized, but don't expect the exact gift your little heart desires — the doll might turn out to be a snow shovel, or the Transformer a set of screwdrivers. It'll depend on what Santa has managed to get into the hardware store.

The old "let's make all our gifts" ploy can lead to some really awful creations that don't merit re-gifting even, so don't go there unless your talents run to more than popsicle stick art. Besides, time's limited now, and kids don't get excited about sweaters, toques or afghans.

If you really can't bear the no-gift idea, here's a thought. We all have "stuff." Root through and find magic stuff, like carbon paper, a flash light, a magnifying glass, knitting needles and fat yarn. Have you got some old letters? Make them into a coding game. Find some old photos or magazine ads and make jigsaw puzzles. You get the idea: kids appreciate a joint activity, and showing a little person the mystery of carbon paper or the joy of a flashlight under the bedcovers to read a book is a delight.

Christmas Day will come no matter if we plan or not. It's a day like most others, so maybe we should stop the hype and the over-indulgence and relax into a slippers and jammies sort of day. Maybe we should opt for the book that needs reading and not guilt ourselves into activities commensurate to Hallmark on a good day. Norman Rockwell and Martha Stewart aren't invited, the Queen is busy, so Christmas can be any sort of day we want it to be.

For most people, going and seeing and meeting and greeting will be the biggest thrill this year. The best gift would be a hug, no bows or tinsel needed. Fend off the winter depths of darkness with every set of lights you can muster, and string them up without a plan just for the glory of the glitter. Make this the holiday you want it to be, and that'll be the true joy of the season.

What a treat it will be to head into the New Year without the added angst of post-Christmas blues because the whole rushed holiday is over. Whatever your Christmas will be, I hope it will be joyous, peaceful, and satisfying. Make it your own without the notion it has to be anything other than that.

With sincere gratitude to all of you who follow the Reever's meanderings every month.

Best wishes for Christmas, and on we go into 2022.

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- "1,000 Perfect Weekends: Great Getaways Around The Globe", Mill Street Books\$50

Gifts for Parents & Grandparents

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Horses of the Country

An Interview with Author Claudia Smith

It should be argued, and perhaps rather vigorously, that to liven up any boring old dinner party you only need to invite a rural historian. They are, after all, brimming with knowledge of the most delightful, interesting and often unusual

In *Horses of the Country*, Claudia presents “a comprehensive history from the Canadian horse and pioneering sires to heavy horses steaming in the fields and light horses trotting to mill or market.”

With a storyteller's love and flair for detail, vintage photographs, plenty of hard-to-get oral history, and her familiarity with horses, Claudia has spun a colourful and charming “horse blanket” of a book, sure to please both those who are knowledgeable about horses and those who are merely curious about them.

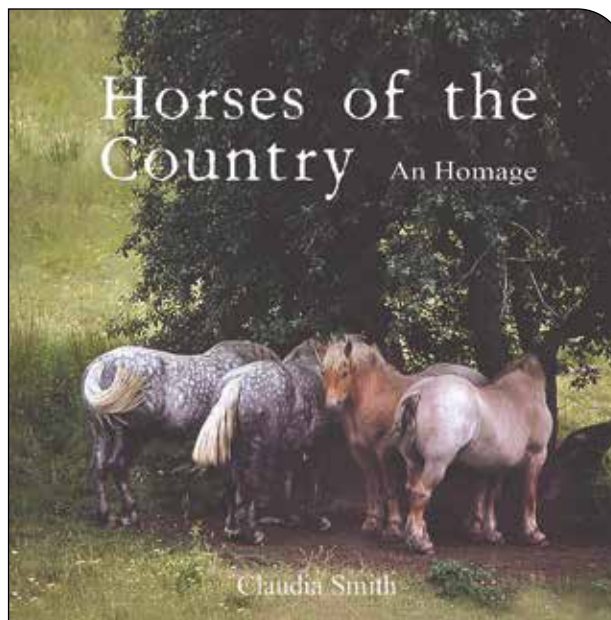
This book has long been in the works. Research for it, in fact, began over forty years ago.

“I have been collecting rural history since moving to Lanark County in 1980,” Claudia explains, “when a neighbour told me about an Indigenous man who had a fast horse called Lady that he took to races in Arnprior. My imagination was caught

by John Pigeau

facts. On subject matters that please, as well. Typically, they are gifted storytellers too — awash with charming anecdotes told only to them, and snatches of odd and little-known tales, those delicious morsels of lore and stories of times gone by that would make even the most conscientious and knowledgeable of librarians envious. All this to say, if you're planning a small holiday gathering, you really need to invite Claudia Smith.

Claudia's latest book, her seventh, pays homage to a big, noble and beautiful subject — majestic creatures that have enchanted and fascinated her since girlhood — horses.



Claudia Smith's new book would make a wonderful gift for anyone who likes horses — or history!

by visions of a swift horse trotting down my road — in a buggy or bright red sleigh in the early 1900s.”

“I was always interested in the farming families' horse stories and over the years recorded a large collection that I have woven into this homage to those big, patient creatures.”

Claudia's love of horses began in her childhood. She first encountered a horse pulling a milk wagon on the street at her grandparents' home in Belleville.

“There were no horses where I lived as a small girl, so every summer when I visited I watched for the milkman and followed the horse and wagon down the street,” she explains. “I patted the horse whenever it stopped and loved the horsey smell on my hands.”

By the time she reached Grade 4, Claudia's family had moved to the country, and Claudia took to visiting a nearby farm where there were horses. Her first significant interaction with horses happened on one such visit.

“I do not remember how it happened or any instruction or talking of any kind, but the elderly farmer handed me the reins of his farm team,” Claudia recounts, “and I drove the horses around the hay field and he built the load as the hay whispered up the hay loader. I have no idea if I was helping or not — but I was very proud.”

The title of the book has an interesting origin too. “I got the title from a quotation by Elizabeth Simcoe, the wife of Lieutenant Governor John Simcoe, who commented on needing ‘a horse of the country’ to be able to travel on the rough pioneer corduroy roads of Eastern Upper Canada. I presume her hardy horse was a French Canadian, so the title has a double reference for the book — the important early breed of horse in Canada and all the horses that helped farming families build and feed the country.”

Horses of the Country is filled with fascinating stories about such families and their love and dependence on horses. Claudia collected so many stories, in fact, she says

it's impossible to pick a favourite, but she does have a few favourite chapters.

“‘Horsing Around’ is about children and youths who played with foals, rode horses to go for the cows, and used buggies to go courting on summer evenings. ‘Straight from the horse's mouth’ is about the bonds between horses, and between people and horses.”

Claudia is familiar with that bond. She hopes this book will highlight those bonds even more, and underscore how horses played such an important part of everyday life in the country, not so very long ago.

“I think people who are so used to car transportation would be surprised at how horses were everywhere in days past,” she says. “Not only were heavy horses used on the farm and light horses driven to church, mill and market, but there were horse-powered machines, funeral processions, parades and accidents. Milk cans were taken to cheese factories, pedlars and many other people travelled the roads, and people had to contend with the dangers of early horse and automobile interactions. There were toll roads and road regulations about speeding on bridges and swearing on the roads.”

Horses touch a chord with everyone, Claudia believes, and they harken back to what people think of as a simpler way of life. “The beauty and grace of the draft horse is recognized by all,” she says. “Nothing turns heads like a horse in a parade or a wedding.”

On today's farms, a horse is almost a forgotten creature, Claudia points out. She thinks this wry comment she heard from an elderly farmer is apt: “When I was young, if you heard a car on the road you ran to have a look at it. Now we've been to the moon and back, and if a horse and buggy went by, you'd run to see it.”

It's not difficult to see her point. Nor is it hard to relate to her fondness for the animals. “Horses have been a life-long love of mine,” she says, “the look of them, the smell of them, the rocking rhythm of a canter; they have taught me patience, responsibility and self-confidence, and have given so much pleasure.”

Horses of the Country is available now at Mill Street Books in Almonte, The Book Nook in Perth, and White Pine Books in Arnprior. It is also available to order at <<https://claudiasmith.ca>>.

My recommendation? For you or for someone you love, pick this one up and put on a bow on it this holiday season. You'll be happy you did.

“This is a horse book for everyone who loves horses,” Claudia wants people to know. “I have tried to make it accessible to horse lovers, without over-explaining things to people who know horses well. I hope it brings back memories for elderly folk, and for younger people, I hope it sheds light on their ancestors' way of life with horses.”

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Passing the Family Pastimes Torch

When the world seems to be changing incredibly quickly, it's good to know that some things are made to last. In the case of Family Pastimes, those things come in colourful boxes and contain imaginative and cooperative games! Owners Jim and Ruth Deacove have been running this delightful business in

by Kris Riendeau

Brooke Valley for 50 years and are now into their eighties. I have fond memories of playing such games as "Sleeping Grump" and "Max the Cat" with my own kids (who are now aged 27 and 30), so when I heard that the Deacoves were getting ready to sell this established business, I contacted them for more details.

theHummm: Congratulations on 50 years in business! What first inspired you to create cooperative games, and how did you turn that passion into a business?

Jim Deacove: When our girls first started playing games they were always squabbling, and first we questioned our parenting methods until we realized that the structure of the games caused the conflicts. After all, the point of the game was to beat each other. We looked around Ottawa game stores and couldn't find any games that nurtured the family values we promoted: share toys, help one another, be kind to pets, find peaceful ways to settle problems, etc. So, necessity

being the mother of invention, we started inventing them. Kids played our creations at birthday parties, folks asked where they could buy them. Ergo, a cottage industry was born.

Although the world has changed rather significantly over the past half-century, Family Pastimes has stayed true to the cooperative game model. What have been some of the biggest changes in your games and the way you market and sell them?

We started out selling at craft sales, then to retail stores, and now we sell on our website <familypastimes.com>. With new equipment, we made our handcrafted versions look more professional. The basic rule of thumb for my designs has always remained: "Play Together". That is, I don't pit people against people.

What has evolved is that early on, I marketed the games as "Everyone Wins or Everyone Loses". My thinking has evolved away from this rather competitive win/lose paradigm to "How well did we all do?" Now we measure the degree of success and there is no losing involved. Didn't get all of our carrots harvested before winter arrived? How many did we get in?

Why do you think it's still important to offer kids (of all ages) cooperative, hands-on games to play? What skills are fostered by playing Family Pastimes games that perhaps aren't addressed by electronic toys and video games?



After a remarkable 50 years in business, Jim and Ruth Deacove are ready to sell their cooperative game business
Family Pastimes

The list is long, and includes being conducive to better health and liking one another, teamwork, shared decision making, openness, trust and safety, self worth and personal power, less aggressive behaviour, emotional maturity... all the myths about competition are dispelled. Cultural conditioning trains us to confuse success with trying to beat others. All games require overcoming some obstacle, but nowhere is it written that the obstacle must be other people.

I understand that you are hoping to sell the business to someone new who can run it for the next 50 years. What kind of abilities and expertise would make someone a good match for this business?

Having a kind heart is essential. Family Pastimes is very much a social mission disguised as a business. As the business grew internationally and took on a fair-sized work force, the help of local business experts was necessary. Currently, Covid has made us small again and, to be honest, while we have been big, and whoever takes on Family Pastimes again may choose to go big, they may realize what we are feeling now, which is that small is beautiful.

Ruth and I are keeping the business almost at the level it was when we began 50 years ago, as a meaningful hobby. Digital printing, cutting and assembling parts, gluing game boards and boxes and so on are easily learned. It is a little more complicated preparing invoices and labeling cartons, because this is done by internet these days, but that also is easily learned.

There are two, if not more, ways the hand-over could take place. A young couple with the technical skills in place could take over. But I also picture a recently retired couple who are looking for a meaningful hobby — that would also be a perfect fit. In any case, interested folks can email me at <info@familypastimes.com> and I will send them a detailed Sales Prospectus.

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The Five “Horts” of Lanark County

I reserve a special place in my heart for our Lanark County Horticultural (Hort) Societies. These are groups of enthusiastic gardeners (some might even say obsessive) who in their own quiet ways make our communities come alive. In the gardening season, Hort members can be seen planting tulip bulbs at the Cenotaph in Almonte, adding some plants at the Victoria School

by David Hinks

Museum Garden in Carleton Place, taking care of gardens at several historic properties in downtown Perth, planting flowers at the Legion and Library gardens in Smiths Falls, and planting flowers at the Five-Span Bridge in Pakenham.

I learned early on when I first joined a Hort that these are tough gardeners with very high standards. One of my early experiences as a member of a Hort was a very humbling one. In “normal” times, Horts hold a couple of Flower Shows — very competitive events that are professionally judged pursuant to the Ontario Judging and Exhibition Standards Rule Book. At the very first Flower and Vegetable Show I competed in, I was quickly brought down a peg or two: in a couple of classes I was the only entry, yet my entries only garnered second- and third-prize ribbons. Obviously I had missed a rule or two.

We are extremely fortunate to have five Horts in Lanark County. These Horts belong to The Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) was created by the Province of Ontario in 1906 via an Act in the Ontario Legislature that split the Agricultural and Horticultural Societies into the Ontario Agricultural Fairs Association and the OHA. The OHA, directly or through local horticultural societies, promotes education about horticulture and greater community involvement in local beautification. The OHA is divided into 19 Districts with 270 autonomous local societies and over 30,000 members. Lanark County societies are part of District 2, which includes 19 societies in central-and-western Ottawa as well as Lanark and Renfrew Counties.

Notwithstanding the fact that Hort membership is open to all genders, my experience is that there appears to be a pronounced gender imbalance. Back in 2015 I wrote a bit of an irreverent article called “Bums in the Air” — I had taken a few photos of one of our Hort Society ‘Work Teams’ (composed exclusively of women) bent over weeding flower gardens — the implication being that men are not capable of that sort of flexibility. Curiously, I still get a bit of grief if I approach a Hort work party with my camera in hand!

I don’t need to remind you that Covid restrictions have severely curtailed the activities of many groups and in many cases even threatened their survival. So, I con-

tacted some of our local Horts to find out how they are faring.

On the very positive side, Covid has had a limited effect on the number of members; in fact, a couple of clubs have even seen a slight increase in membership. I think that the level of interest is there since the Horts



have been able in large measure to continue their outdoor garden projects (maintaining social distancing of course). A measure of social connection was safely maintained while members were able to get some exercise and enjoy gardens and nature. A limited number of tours of members’ gardens were held, along with some outdoor plant sales, as these are important fundraisers for many clubs. Communication was maintained with members via email and newsletters.

Many Horts have been around for a long time — Almonte was able to celebrate their 100th anniversary in the Library Garden this

past summer, outdoors and maintaining all Covid protocols!

On a less positive note, regular in-person meetings have been sorely missed. While Zoom presentations filled some of the gap, as did virtual flower shows, participation was far less than it would be at in-person meetings. Sadly, Pakenham had to cancel their public-school veggie garden club since volunteers were not allowed on school property, and Perth had to cancel their tremendously popular grade three junior garden program. Horts are cautiously looking forward to the possibility of resuming in-person meetings and are busy lining up interesting and knowledgeable speakers.

Local Horts are also looking forward to hosting the 2023 OHA Convention at the Brookstreet Hotel in Kanata. This is a really big deal — planning is proceeding full speed ahead!

Go to <gardenontario.org> — the website of the OHA — to find a Hort in your area. What is amazing to me is the number of societies that are within easy driving distance. Within a fifteen-minute drive from the Almonte Old Town Hall there are four societies to be found, and if you’re willing to drive 45 minutes you have a choice of an additional ten societies.

So please stop and plant some roses (or a tree, or potatoes...). Come and meet a lot of experts and learn more about what Horticultural Societies have to offer!



Season's Greetings!

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Ye Merrie Olde Low-Carbon Holiday Season!

The holiday season is following hot on the heels of the final word from the UN Climate Change Conference (COP) in Glasgow. The final declaration was cobbled together and a tad disappointing to say the least. Young activists who know our futures depend on aggressive action on the climate crisis are telling the world that it's up to each and every one of us to do our part since governments still aren't acting sufficiently or quickly enough to keep the climate in a safe place for all of us.

by Chandler Swain

Climate Network Lanark (CNL) is focused on helping local citizens wade through all the information to help us take responsibility for lowering our carbon footprint in all aspects of life. Currently CNL is collecting information from the responses to our community survey (if you haven't filled it in, please do so at climatenetworklanark.ca) to be able

3.8 percent of an individual's annual carbon footprint of 36,000lbs." Holy holly, Rudolf!

O Tannenbaum!

Imagine this: there are estimated to be 30 million Christmas trees sold in the US each Christmas season. Evidence collected by Telesure reports that with all things considered, artificial trees are two times as carbon-intensive as a real tree! We asked local organic Christmas tree grower Grant Martin of Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm what he has to say about how his seasonal farm produce — trees — sequester carbon (aside from through their roots into the soil). "A good source of sequestering carbon is intensive managed pasture," Grant replied. "While we don't pasture animals between the trees, we do grow clovers and grasses. This keeps the ground covered and insulated which promotes diversity and helps form symbiotic relationships between tree and grass roots. The grass in the pathways is allowed to grow taller to maximize carbon sequestering, and all of the plant material is returned to the soil."

Aside from the carbon benefits of getting a locally grown live tree, says Martin, "by choosing real trees, people help keep jobs, money and carbon in their community. We love to see families creating their own traditions here when finding their Christmas tree."

Let There be Light!

In our rural county there is a magical sight in the darkest days of winter: cheerful Christmas lights! This may be one of the most heart-warming things about the season. It is pretty common now to use LED lights and there are tons on the market; but how about we take care of them in the off-season so we don't need to deal with a huge tangle of lights each December, then give up and buy more. When you do need more, make use of the variety of used goods stores and centres in our region. Most of them have enormous collections of Christmas decorations that have been donated through the year, and now fill their aisles.



to show our County Council that the community is expecting the Lanark County Climate Action Plan to have aggressive targets and actions. Lots of excellent suggestions are on the table that are do-able and will only make our county more prosperous and resilient.

But for the moment we turn to celebrating as best we can our second holiday season compromised by the pandemic. More than ever, we need fun, celebratory activities with our family and friends. Are you wondering how to stick to your climate goals? Maybe you are already opting out of much of the hype, paring down the stuff, ramping up the spirit and following the hierarchy in the graphic on this page.

CNL would like to offer some ideas that support local makers and growers so you can feel better about not adding to "one of the biggest annual environmental disasters in the world". Here's what the website telesurenglish.net has to say about Christmas' carbon footprint and its irreversible consequences: "A study in the U.S. suggests that during the holiday season, each person produces an additional 1,400 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂). This is equivalent to about three weeks of driving or about

Buyest Thou Less Stuff

That is an interesting quandary, as our whole economy is fueled by us buying stuff. Of course, when buying holiday gifts you can choose to buy local and buy used. TheHumm's Gift Giving Guide and thinklocallanark.com are two great places to start!

Another idea is to get creative about gifting a non-consumable. This is a service or an experience instead of an object — anything from making and hosting a special dinner to taking a grandchild on a special hike. How about a week's worth of dog walking; a gift certificate for a massage, spa or haircut; some hours of a landscaper's services or a monthly trial of a favourite craft beer?

Lanark County is so full of makers and growers of wonderful, imaginative stuff!

We offer up this Low Carbon Holiday Challenge and would love to hear if you were able to meet it! Let us know what you are doing for a low carbon holiday season by sharing your stories or pictures

with Climate Network Lanark on instagram #cnlholidaychallenge or by email at info@climatenetworklanark.ca.

Can you get through this holiday season procuring everything you need for your celebration right here in Lanark County? Sourcing gifts that are produced and sold right in the county is very helpful in shrinking our collective carbon footprint. Personally, we are doing the really hard work of sampling wine, beer and spirits from Lanark and Ontario producers to choose as presents. It's tough work, but somebody has to do it!

Driving to malls and shopping online doesn't compare with being out and about in the community — meeting your neighbours and being inspired by our local creative spirit. Happy Low Carbon Holidays!



Treats from the Ottawa Valley!

Looking for that perfect gift idea? Consider ordering a gift basket from **Ottawa Valley Gift Baskets**. Baskets are created showcasing locally sourced fine food items including **Balderson Cheese; Equator Coffee; Mississippi Meadows Honey; michaelsdolce** gourmet jams; **Temple's Sugar Bush** maple syrup; **Mrs. McGarrigle's** chutney, mustards, spices and vinaigrettes; **The Mix Company** gluten free mixes and dips; and **Village Treats** chocolates.

Select from many basket ideas ranging in price from \$30.95 for the **Lil' Taste O' The Valley**

to \$199.95 for **The Office**

Commendation — or let us design a custom basket creation for you! We deliver locally and ship throughout Canada using CanadaPost & FedEx Ground.



(613)251-0833 www.ottawavalleygiftbaskets.ca

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Visit hhnl.ca/trees to order now



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— Karen Joy Fowler

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- A perfect green gift • Enhance your property

Reid Gardens is providing a storage and distribution site, and will include Planting Mix and Root Rescue (mycorrhizae) with each tree purchased. Spring 2022 pickup at the Garden Centre, 140 Pick Road, Carleton Place.

Gifts for Lovers of Vintage Treasures

- 1.5 oz pure silver classic Mountie Hat coin, Alliance Coin & Banknote.....\$230
- Estate jewellery, Almonte Antiques & Collectibles.....various
- Vintage ironing board table, Darrell Thomas Textiles.....\$80
- Vintage cup and saucers from Cactus Annie's, The Queen's Crafters.....\$12 & up



AiC: Mireille Asselin, Almonte, Jan 20
Almonte Lecture Series, Zoom, Jan 28
Folkus: The Pairs/Tragedy Ann, Almonte, Jan 29
Almonte Lecture Series, Zoom, Feb 25
Folkus: Shawna Caspi w/Amanda Lowe, Almonte, Feb 26
 AiC: Cheng2 Duo, Almonte, Mar 5
Almonte Lecture Series, Zoom, Mar 25
Folkus: Julian Taylor w/Catrina Sturton, Almonte, Mar 26
 AiC: Lodom Ensemble, Almonte, Apr 2
Folkus: Ian Sherwood w/Evangeline Gentle, Almonte, Apr 30
Art Works! Perth Art Tour, Jun 24-26
MidSummer Herbfest, Waba, Jul 24, 2022
Puppets Up! Festival, Almonte, Aug 12-14
North Lanark Highland Games, Almonte, Aug 27, 2022



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<p>Kanata Civic Art Gallery presents <i>Tis the Season</i> <kanatagallery.ca> Mississippi Valley Textile Museum presents <i>In the Middle of the World</i> [to Dec 18] <mvtm.ca> Perth Museum presents <i>Home for the Holidays — a Matheson Family Christmas</i> Sivarulrasa Gallery presents <i>7th Anniversary Show</i> <sivarulrasa.com> Strévé Design Studio & Boutique presents <i>The Art of Gift</i> <strevedesign.com> The Almonte Library Corridor Gallery presents Chris Cavan's watercolours, acrylics, mixed media</p>			
<p>6 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam</p>	<p>7 🎵 Matt Dickson, The Cove 🎵 Smiths Falls Bridge Club 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Zoom 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed Breakfast, Carleton Place</p>	<p>8 🎵 Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Almonte Bridge Club 🎵 Karaoke, The Golden Arrow</p>	<p>9 🎵 Holiday Night Market, Almonte 🎵 Brock Zeman, The Cove 🎵 Gordie Johnson, Neat 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast, Almonte 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed Game Day, Mill of Kintail 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, CP</p>
<p>13 🎵 Curious and Kind Presents, Almonte 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam</p>	<p>14 🎵 Dave Balfour, The Cove 📺 Lanark Co. Camera Club Mtg., Zoom 🎵 Smiths Falls Bridge Club 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Zoom 🎵 Outdoor Lessons & Carols and Potluck, Franktown 🎵 Gardening Workshop, Zoom</p>	<p>15 🎵 Breakfast with Soul, Zoom 🎵 Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Almonte Bridge Club 🎵 Karaoke, The Golden Arrow</p>	<p>16 🎵 Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts, Almonte 🎵 Sue Prosser, The Cove 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, CP 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast, Almonte</p>
<p>20 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam</p>	<p>21 🎵 Kent Nicholson, The Cove 🎵 Smiths Falls Bridge Club 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Zoom 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed Breakfast, Carleton Place</p>	<p>22 🎵 Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Almonte Bridge Club 🎵 Karaoke, The Golden Arrow</p>	<p>23 🎵 Christmas Eve Jazz Night, The Cove 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, CP 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast, Almonte 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed Game Day, Mill of Kintail</p>
<p>27 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam 🎵 Eric Uren, The Cove</p>	<p>28 🎵 Meghan Balogh & Martin Smit, The Cove 🎵 Amos the Transparent, Neat 🎵 Smiths Falls Bridge Club 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Zoom</p>	<p>29 🎵 Amos the Transparent, Neat 🎵 Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Almonte Bridge Club 🎵 Karaoke, The Golden Arrow</p>	<p>30 🎵 Henry Norwood, The Cove 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, CP 🎵 Stand-up Comedy, Neat 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast, Almonte</p>

Festivals

Pakenham Santa Claus Parade, Dec 4, 1PM. So nice it goes 'round twice! 256-1077. Stewart Comm Ctr. Food/\$ donations to Food Bank
Perth Santa Claus Parade, Dec 4, 5PM. perthsantaclausparade.com
Almonte Christmas Night Parade, Dec 5, 5PM. 256-1077. Food/\$ donations to Lions Club Baskets.
CP Winter Wonderland Festival, Dec 10-12. Dec 10 (5-8PM) Bowes Brothers sing along; Dec 11 (1-8PM) winter activities, food, artisans, 2PM Splash'N Boots, 6:30PM Jaxstraw; Dec 12 (9:30AM-3PM) w/10AM Splash'N Boots. 42 Moore St., Carleton Place. \$10 from ticketsplease.ca

Youth

See Santa & Wagon Rides, Dec 4, 11, 12. 12-2PM. Accessible family fun. Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm, Pakenham. cedarhillchristmastreefarm.com

Literature

Horses of the Country, Dec 4, 2-4PM, signing, Middleville Hall; Dec 5, 2PM talk+sign, MERA, McDonalds Corners. New book by Claudia Smith. Available at Mill Street Books, Book Nook, White Pine Books, https://claudiasmith.ca

Local Food

Almonte Holiday Farmers' Market, Dec 11, 9AM-1PM. Food & gifts. Almonte Community Ctr, almontefarmersmarket.com
Back Forty Artisan Cheese Holiday Open House, Dec 11, 10AM-4PM. Food & gifts. artisancheese.ca

Visual Arts

Holiday Maker's Market, Dec 3-5, 10-12, 17-19, 9AM-5PM. North Folk Café, Perth. northfolkcafe.ca

Nick of Time Artisan Craft Show, Dec 4, 10AM-3PM. Crystal Palace, Perth
"Just in Time" Pop Up Studio Sale, Dec 11, 11AM-5PM. Ceramics, drawings, leather, herbals. 2501 Old Brooke Road. susiesosler.com
Lanark Co. Camera Club Mtg, Dec 14, 7-9PM. Xmas Zoom Social. presidentofcccameraclub@gmail.com for Zoom link

Theatre

Friday Night at the Movies, Dec 3, 7PM. Details: studiotheatreperth.com. Tix: ticketsplease.ca. \$12
Sketchy Santa: Holiday Shorts, Dec 10-11, 16-18, 7:30PM. Adult-themed hilarious short plays. Fundraiser for Puppets Up! Almonte Old Town Hall. ticketsplease.ca, \$30
Auditions: Mudds do Mamma Mia!, Dec 11, 9AM-4PM. >16 yrs old. Shows in Apr-May. Carleton Place Town Hall. Sign up: jsx4@rogers.com

Curious and Kind Presents: comedy, music & storytelling, Dec 13, 7PM. Comedian Dawn Xanklin, musician Trevor Lubin, storyteller Susan Macaulay. Almonte Old Town Hall. \$20. Tix: curiousandkindal- monte@gmail.com

Community

Smiths Falls Bridge Club, Tue 1PM. Smiths Falls Legion
Almonte Bridge Club, Wed 1PM. Must register first: cille.harris@ra.ca. Almonte Legion
Naismith Men's Shed (naismithmensshed.ca): Thu, 9AM, breakfast, Superior Restaurant, Almonte; Fri, 10AM, Zoom chat. naismithmensshed2@gmail.com for link
 Dec 9, 23, 10:30AM, Game Day, Mill of Kintail boardroom, Almonte;

Hackberry Men's Shed (almontecarver@gmail.com): Tue, 7PM, Zoom chat. rkamm@connectwell.ca for link
 Thu, 7PM, meet at workshop, Shed opposite 98 Donald St., CP;
 Dec 7, 21, 7:30AM, breakfast (\$10+), Gourmet Restaurant, CP;

CP&D Horticultural Society: AGM, Dec 1, 7PM. Xmas urn arrangements. cphorticulture@gmail.com for Zoom link.
Portland Historical Society's Xmas Market, Dec 4, 10AM-5PM. Crafts, music, clothing. Emmanuel Heritage Centre, 2767 Hwy 15, Portland. emmanuelheritage2@gmail.com

Christmas Treats Sale, Dec 4, 10AM-2PM. Homemade candy, baking & frozen turkey dinners. Trinity St. Andrew's United, Renfrew. 432-2285

DECEMBER 2021

Friday	Saturday	Sunday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 <i>Bells of St. Paul's</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Friday Night at the Movies</i>, Perth 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast</i>, Zoom 🎵 <i>Ambre McLean Christmas Concert</i>, Smiths Falls 🎵 <i>A Very Murriner Christmas</i>, The Cove 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎆 <i>Santa Claus Parades</i>, Pakenham, Perth 🎵 <i>See Santa & Wagon Rides</i>, Pakenham 🎵 <i>Montréal Guitare Trio</i>, Almonte 📖 <i>Horses of the Country book signing</i>, Middleville 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 📺 <i>Nick of Time Artisan Craft Show</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Portland Historical Society's Xmas Market</i> 🎵 <i>Christmas Treats Sale</i>, Renfrew 🎵 <i>Ambre McLean Christmas Concert</i>, Smiths Falls 🎵 <i>East Coast Experience</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>Rob Lutes</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Dirt Truck w/Joel Brown</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Al Tambay Duo</i>, Waterfront Gastropub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎆 <i>Christmas Night Parade</i>, Almonte 📖 <i>Horses of the Country book talk & signing</i>, McDonalds Corners 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Eric Uren</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>Open Mic w/ Judd Muth</i>, Weatherhead Brew Co.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎆 <i>Winter Wonderland Festival</i>, Carleton Place 🎵 <i>Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts</i>, Almonte 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Young Petty Stones</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>Gordie Johnson</i>, Neat 🎵 <i>Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast</i>, Zoom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎆 <i>Winter Wonderland Festival</i>, Carleton Place 📺 <i>Holiday Farmers' Market</i>, Almonte 📺 <i>Back Forty Cheese Open House</i>, Mississippi Station 📺 <i>"Just in Time" Studio Sale</i>, Maberly 🎵 <i>Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts</i>, Almonte 🎵 <i>Auditions: Mamma Mia!</i>, Carleton Place 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>See Santa & Wagon Rides</i>, Pakenham 🎵 <i>Young Petty Stones</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>ABBA Revisited</i>, Smiths Falls 🎵 <i>The Barrel Boys</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Dirt Truck w/Joel Brown</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Redneck Limousine</i>, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 <i>Scenes of Christmas Past</i>, Appleton 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎆 <i>Winter Wonderland Festival</i>, Carleton Place 🎵 <i>Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts</i>, Almonte 🎵 <i>See Santa & Wagon Rides</i>, Pakenham 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Eric Uren</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>Open Mic w/ Judd Muth</i>, Weatherhead Brew Co. 🎵 <i>Scenes of Christmas Past</i>, Appleton
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 <i>Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts</i>, Almonte 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Miss Emily</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>MonkeyJunk</i>, Neat 🎵 <i>Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast</i>, Zoom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 <i>Sketchy Santa — Holiday Shorts</i>, Almonte 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Chris Murphy</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>Christmas in the Valley w/ Marleen Fawcett</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Dirt Truck w/Joel Brown</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>MonkeyJunk</i>, Neat 🎵 <i>Al Tambay Duo</i>, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 <i>Horse & Wagon Rides</i>, Perth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📺 <i>Holiday Maker's Market</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Perth Citizen's Band</i>, Perth 🎵 <i>Eric Uren</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>Open Mic w/ Judd Muth</i>, Weatherhead Brew Co.
<p>🎵 <i>Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast</i>, Zoom</p>		
<p>🎵 <i>New Year's Eve with Turpin's Trail</i>, The Cove</p> <p>🎵 <i>Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast</i>, Zoom</p>	<p>🎵 <i>Polar Bear Plunge</i>, Perth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 <i>Eric Uren</i>, The Cove 🎵 <i>Open Mic w/ Judd Muth</i>, Weatherhead Brew Co. 🎵 <i>Trivia Night</i>, Weatherhead Brew Co.

PLEASE NOTE:
In-person events generally require proof of double-vaccination. Some only require masks. Some will accept a negative Covid test within 48 hrs of the event. Please check first if you are not yet vaccinated.

Holiday Night Market, Dec 9, 5-8PM. Indoor specials & outdoor events. Downtown Almonte

Scenes of Christmas Past, Dec 11, 12, 10AM-4PM. Crafts & treats. N. Lanark Regional Museum. northlanarkregional-museum.com. \$10 per family

Outdoor Lessons & Carols and Potluck, Dec 14, 4PM. St James Anglican Carriage House then Centennial Hall, Franktown

Gardening Workshop: Regenerative Agriculture in Action, Dec 14, 7PM. w/Alberto Suarez-Esteban. jyoung@carebridge.ca for Zoom link/details.

Breakfast with Soul, Dec 15, 9-11AM. Speaker: author G. Devika Eifert. powerupyourlife@gmail.com for zoom link. Free

Horse & Wagon Rides, Dec 18. Crystal Palace, Perth

Music

Bells of St. Paul's, Dec 3, 5:30PM. Handbell choir. Crystal Palace, Perth

Ambre McLean Christmas Concert, Dec 3 (8PM), 4 (7PM). Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. Ticketsplease.ca, \$25

Almonte in Concert: **Montréal Guitare Trio**, Dec 4, 7:30PM. Tix: almonteinconcert.com

Harmony Concerts: 7PM, Studio Theatre Perth. Tix: harmonyconcerts.ca

Dec 4, Rob Lutes, \$15-25

Dec 11, The Barrel Boys, \$20-25

Dec 18, Christmas in the Valley feat. Marleen Fawcett w/Mountain Breeze, \$20-25

ABBA Revisited, Dec 11, 8PM. Gallipeau Centre, Smiths Falls. \$34.50/39.50

Perth Citizen's Band, Dec 19, 2PM. Crystal Palace, Perth



Pub Listings

Carp Masonic Lodge: Monday Carp Celtic Jam, 7-9PM

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

Dec 2 Luke Michielsen, \$10

Dec 3 A Very Murriner Christmas w/ Steve Murriner & Friends, 6-10PM, \$70 dinner+show

Dec 4 East Coast Experience, 6-10PM, \$60 dinner+show

Dec 7 Matt Dickson

Dec 9 Brock Zeman

Dec 10, 11 Young Petty Stones, 6-10PM, \$70 dinner+show

Dec 14 Dave Balfour

Dec 16 Sue Prosser

Dec 17 Miss Emily, 6-10PM, \$80 dinner+show

Dec 18 Chris Murphy

Dec 21 Kent Nicholson

Dec 23 Xmas Eve Jazz Night w/ Spencer Evans Band + Dick Ready Xmas Tree Fundraiser w/Robbie Merkley + Ugly Mask & Sweater, 7-10PM

Dec 27 Eric Uren

Dec 28 Meghan Balogh & Martin Smit

Dec 30 Henry Norwood, 6-9PM

Dec 31 New Year's Eve w/Turpin's Trail, 7PM-1AM, \$85 dinner+show

Golden Arrow Pub (Perth, 267-4500): 9PM, Wed Karaoke; Sat Dirt Truck w/Joel Brown

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

Dec 9, 10 Gordie Johnson (of Big Sugar), \$72.50

Dec 17, 18 MonkeyJunk, \$50

Dec 28, 29 Amos the Transparent, \$30

Dec 30 Stand-up Comedy, \$30

The Waterfront Gastropub (CP, 257-5755): 2-5PM

Dec 4, 18 Al Tambay Duo

Dec 11 Redneck Limousine

Weatherhead Brew Co. (Perth, 201-2337): Open Mic Sundays w/Judd Muth, 3-5PM

Dec 2 Trivia Night, reserve groups 2-6, 5:30-7:30PM



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