

DECEMBER 2022

# the Hummm

free

Arts,  
Entertainment  
& Ideas



The 2022 Gift Giving Guide



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December's Events



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The Best Pageant



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A Sound Experience



The Art of Evgenia Badiyanova p.5



## Helping at the Holidays

Local charities and not-for-profit organizations play integral and important roles in our Ottawa Valley communities. Now more than ever they could use our support, so please consider making a donation — or gifting a donation in someone's name — at the holidays.

These organizations would be so appreciative of your support:

United Way East Ontario <unitedwayeo.ca>

Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust <mmlt.ca>

Lanark County Interval House <lcih.org>



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# Did You Know...

... that since we began publishing our weekly **Humm** e-newsletter back in April of 2020 we have put out a whopping 131 editions? Most editions feature interviews with creative local movers and shakers, and now that events have come back online they all include a round-up of upcoming happenings with links to websites and ticket outlets!

So if you sometimes forget to check your print issue of theHumm later on in the month but don't want to miss anything, we humbly recommend that you subscribe. It's easy to do so, we promise not to share your email address with anyone, and best of all — it's FREE! You can subscribe by visiting <thehummm.com> and clicking on the link, or you can email us at <editor@thehummm.com> and we'll send the link directly to you.

What a convenient way to keep on top of all the great events happening in our once-again vibrant area!

— Kris, Rob and Rona



Who's Reading theHumm

In April of 2021, **Christine Dixon** wrote: "My cat **Toby** got particularly engrossed in reading the February issue of theHumm. There's nothing like curling up with a good read on a chilly winter afternoon! Even more apropos, it was one of the articles on things to do to cope with Covid stress. A double win!"



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Humble Thought

Explorer and travel writer **Freya Stark** on aligning your thoughts and actions:

*There can be no  
happiness  
if the things  
we believe in  
are different  
from the things  
we do.*

Source: *The Journey's Echo*

Greater Arnprior  
Chamber of Commerce  
presents

**Moonlight & Mistletoe Market**  
December 15, 4-8PM

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

**Submissions**  
By email or on disk.

**Content Deadline:**  
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**Thumm's up this month to:**  
The cast, crew and supporters of Humm Team Productions' um... production of *Sketchy Santa!*

Thanks to the cast and crew for sticking with us over the better part of two years, and for never letting your enthusiasm for the project (or your jolly spirits) fade. Thank you for being "fools for the divine", and thanks to Kristen for putting her tiny hands to good use.

Thanks also to everyone who came out to see the show — you helped raise \$3,450 for Puppets Up, but most importantly you took a chance and supported locally-created theatre. You rock!!

**TICKETS PLEASE** | TICKETS ON SALE NOW AT **TICKETSPLEASE.CA**

<b>Christmas with Quartom</b> presented by Almonte in Concert <b>Almonte Old Town Hall</b> December 3	<b>Women &amp; Men of the Tay</b> Christmas Concert <b>St James Anglican Church, Perth</b> December 7
<b>What Now Lanark County?</b> <b>Almonte Old Town Hall</b> December 9	<b>Marleyn &amp; Lacroix</b> Cello and piano recital <b>MERA Schoolhouse</b> December 11
<b>Few and Fewer</b> presented by Almonte in Concert <b>Almonte Old Town Hall</b> January 14	<b>Anne of Green Gables</b> by <b>Perth Community Choir</b> <b>Mason Theatre, Perth</b> January 26-29

**Folkus Concert Series**  
Series Passes  
**Almonte Old Town Hall**  
January-April 2023

**SELLING TICKETS?** Concerts · Plays · Festivals  
**WE CAN HELP!** Setup · Support · Promotion



# 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. Some

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!

by Kris and Rob Riendeau

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 decided to include theHumm's 22<sup>nd</sup> annual **Gift Giving Guide** in both the November and December issues. After years of shut-downs (and construction!), they need your support a lot more than the big box stores and online retailers do.

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

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 thank our readers for shopping locally and thereby supporting both the shops and our paper. To see photos of many of these items, subscribe to our free weekly Hummail e-newsletter! Find details at <thehummm.com>.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy holiday season!

## Gifts for Health & Wellbeing

- Thymes Honey & Lavender hand wash or hand lotion, Dragonfly Boutique..... \$19.99
- Le Comptoir Ginkgo Nebulizer essential oil diffuser, Foodsmiths..... \$107.99
- Acupuncture treatment, Thrive Chiropractic..... \$60

## Gifts for Hosts & Hostesses

- Seedlip non-alcoholic spirits, Dandelion Foods..... \$46.95
- Batik cotton cocktail napkins (set of 6), Fine Batiks..... \$20
- HoliYay! Collection (gift box of 5 holiday bars), Hummingbird Chocolate..... \$44.99
- Smoked salmon quiche, North Folk Café & Bakery..... \$18
- Candles, napkins, duo of cheeses & accompaniment, Pêches & Poivre..... \$6.50-30
- Marianne Brisebois' MB Collection holiday pillows, The Queen's Crafters..... \$26 & up



# Gift Giving Guide Shop Directory

Here's an alphabetical list of the shops that are participating in the December 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!

- 8008 Lingerie ..... Almonte, p.6
- Alliance Coin & Banknote..... Almonte, p.10
- Almonte Antiques & Collectibles ..... Almonte, p.27
- Back Forty Artisan Cheese ..... Mississippi Station, p.22
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- The Book Nook & Other Treasures ..... Perth, p.12
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- Thrive Chiropractic..... Almonte, p.27
- Vamos Outdoors..... Almonte, p.2, 7 & 20

## DARRELL THOMAS TEXTILES

7 Mill Street, #101, Almonte [darrellthomas.com](http://darrellthomas.com)





# Folkus Concert Series Brings Neighbours & Friends to the Stage in 2023

By Sandy Irvin

Almonte's Folkus Concert Series is thrilled to announce that we are having a 2023 season! We're celebrating friends and neighbours of the series — some stunning local talent, some old friends and friends of theirs from far away, and a brand-new project featuring original music created especially for you. It's hard to believe we've been putting on shows since 2002!

Our first show, on January 28, will feature **Jim Bryson**, the Steinway piano and friends. Jim Bryson is a songwriter's songwriter, producer and player, who has worked with Kathleen Edwards, The Tragically Hip and the Weakerthans. Recently, a number of CFMA-nominated albums have come out of his studio down the road in Stittsville, including Ken Yates, The Skydiggers, Suzie Ungerlieder, Caroline Brooks (Good Lovelies), and recent Folkus player Evangeline Gentle. Jim will be taking a rare turn on the piano — yes, the Old Town Hall's beautiful piano — as well as offering a set with some musical friends.

Opening for Jim Bryson will be **Broken Bridges**, a local fiddle trio with a CFMA nomination in the young performer category.

On February 18, favourite Folkus alumna **Suzie Vinnick** returns with her Australian colleague **Lloyd Spiegel** in tow. Vinnick needs no introduction to our audiences, as she is a long-time friend of the series, beloved for her blistering bluesy guitar and bass chops and honey-sweet vocals. Suzie has won ten Maple Blues Awards, one Canadian Folk Music Award and is a three-time Juno nominee. She has also twice won the International Songwriting Competition — Blues Category. She has just released her seventh solo album entitled *Fall Back Home*.

Lloyd Spiegel is almost Suzie's Australian counterpart, with fourteen Australian Blues Music Awards under his belt. He blends jaw-dropping guitar chops with a commanding voice, powerful songwriting, storytelling and comedy. A touring artist since age 11 and with ten albums to his name, Lloyd has squeezed more into his 40 years than many do in a lifetime.

On March 25 we are so excited to bring **The Gravel Project** to the Folkus stage! Thanks to some funding from Ontario Presents, we were able to establish a residency for two local artists, **Vicki Brittle** and **Brock Zeman**. They have never collaborated before, although they have competed against each other in the International Songwriting Competition Finals. They are, at press time, setting up a collaborative project with some community elements and some really interesting side players. So even though they may occasionally play local venues, this show will be like no other. Stay tuned

through the Folkus website <folkusalmonte.com> and social media for sneak peeks of the work in progress!

Then on April 29 we finally get to bring **A Leverage for Mountains** to our stage. Originally scheduled for 2020, A Leverage for Mountains have been honing their chops at home in Val-des-Monts, and recently released a new EP entitled *Love Out of the Dark*. They are stunning singers, and we expect their voices to soar here in the Almonte Old Town Hall.

Opening for A Leverage for Mountains will be **Mia Kelly**, a Gatineau-based singer with strong Lanark County connections. Blessed with a knockout voice, Mia's material ranges from sweet folk to blues-inflected pop.

Our shows are still held at the Almonte Old Town Hall, third floor, in the Ron Caron Auditorium. There's an accessible elevator you can reach from the side entrance. Doors open at 7:30, showtime is at 8PM. There will be t-shirts and music at the merch table, and beverages and cookies at the bar.

Season Passes will be available as of December 1 through our ticketing partner Tickets Please



The 2023 Folkus Concert Series features **A Leverage for Mountains** (above), among many other acts

(ticketsplease.ca or 485-6434), and single tickets will be available starting on January 1. Check us out <folkusalmonte.com> for last-minute updates!

## Gifts to Divert & Entertain

- Vintage board games**, Almonte Antiques & Collectibles .....\$10 & up
- 4- and 7-course tasting menus**, Black Tartan Kitchen.....\$89 & 119
- Series pass to four fabulous concerts**, Folkus Concert Series..... \$110
- Chocolate salami (perfect dessert charcuterie!)**, Hummingbird Chocolate.....\$29.99
- RC Pets holiday kitty toys**, Natural Pet Foods.....\$3.99
- Harry Potter Hogwarts or Polar Express Lionel train sets**, Spark Books & Curios...\$199
- Board & card games for all ages**, The Book Nook & Other Treasures..... various



32 Gore St. East  
Perth

Our traditional **Christmas Shoppe** is brimming with Christmas ornaments, Jim Shore figurines the lovely collections by Michel Design Works and Christmas linens.

*Merry Christmas from our Home to Yours*



This year, the proceeds from the sale of the **Cardinal Messenger** are being donated to the **Alzheimer Society Lanark Leeds Grenville**.

Thank you for your continued support!



Join us **Saturday, Dec. 3** for Christmas music by **Long Sault Trio** while you browse our new boutique

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\* find both shoppes on Facebook for updates \*



# Evgenia Badiyanova – Watercolour Whimsy

On her Etsy global marketplace shop, Carleton Place artist Evgenia Badiyanova describes her delightful watercolour art as “Real life with a whimsical twist.” Since whimsical is defined as “Playfully quaint or fanciful, especially in an appealing and amusing way” (wordhippo.com), it is the perfect descriptor. Her artworks are beautifully drawn and painted, and her forte is the humorous twist with which she presents her endearing characters.

by Sally Hansen

Whether it’s iconic Canada geese playing hockey, piglets riding scooters, or adorable cats and dogs indulging in a wide variety of comical pursuits, she depicts familiar animals happily engaged in very unfamiliar activities. She has a well-developed and quirky sense of humour. I would never have thought of depicting a fish holding an umbrella over its head as it swam around... or a vacationing llama drinking a martini. Her anthropomorphized critters are charming and cheering, and an uplifting addition to a child’s nursery or your own kitchen or bedroom. For more conventional tastes, Evgenia displays her full range of artistic talent with lovely botanical and avian subjects as well.

## From the Meticulous to the Sublime

By day Evgenia works as a computer expert competent in languages from Assembler to C++ and beyond, immersing herself in the complexities of performance analysis, first at IBM and later at Elastic. Remote work enables her and her “totally supportive” husband, Aaron Niedbala, also a computer virtuoso, to raise two young children. Their daughter is almost three, and their son had his first birthday while I was writing this. In her spare time (?) Evgenia invents sublimely heartwarming birds and critters to star in her watercolour paintings.

## Honk If You Love Wildlife!

“Why did you name your shop Goosi?” I inquired. The explanation encompassed this young mother’s extraordinary life thus far. To begin, goosi is the plural of goose in Russian. Evgenia was born in Russia. Her mother was a watercolourist and Evgenia remembers always loving to draw and paint. However, her parents prudently encouraged her to develop her math and science skills as the best investment in her future. She eventually attended Columbia International College in Hamilton, ON, for

her last year of what we call high school. In Russia she lived in a city named Tolyatti where cats and pigeons were the only wildlife one encountered. When she moved to Ontario, she was mesmerized by the myriad diverse species with whom we share our spaces.

Once she was enrolled in the renowned computer science program at the University of Waterloo, she realized just how endemic Canada geese are and learned to love them in spite of the booby traps they deposited around the campus. After graduation she and her husband, whom she met during her first year at University, worked in Toronto. They persuaded IBM to let them work for a year in a charming small town in England where the company has a massive facility in the middle of the countryside. They both loved it, and after their return to Toronto, decided they would like



to live in a more rural environment where they could be involved in community activities and start a family.

In 2019, after a brief stint in Ottawa, they purchased their first home on a quiet street in Carleton Place with a view of the lake at the end of their road. After visiting art shows at the Carleton Place Canoe Club, Evgenia signed up as a member of Arts Carleton Place and began to consider displaying her art to the public. Last week I dropped in at the Arts Carleton Place pre-holiday Itty Bitty Art & Artisan Sale to meet her while she was participating in her first-ever art show.



Each artist featured in theHumm is virtually forced by yours truly to provide a one-sentence response as to WHY? they make the specific art they spend so much of their lives creating. Evgenia’s response explains the whimsy she injects into her subjects: “It really makes me happy when customers respond so positively. I’m grateful to make a difference in someone’s day.” She particularly enjoys it when people comment that her paintings trigger good feelings and happy memories.

Judging from the smiles on viewers’ faces at her booth, her first foray into the world of art shows was encouraging and highly gratifying. Her gratitude to her husband for the generous support he provides to enable her to pursue her passion for art is palpable. She actually blushed when she described how much she appreciates his help juggling their shared responsibilities for two small children and two full-time jobs.

## The Unexpected Gift of a Postal Strike

“Canada Post is responsible for my art career,” she confides. When she graduated from university, she was not eligible to work in Canada until she received her official work permit. In a fortuitous incident of “every cloud has a silver lining”, Evgenia’s work permit was delayed as the result of a one-month strike by postal workers. This gifted her with the first leisure time she had experienced since she had enrolled in the University of Waterloo’s demanding work term academic program. As a result, she popped into an art supply store, bought a beginner watercolour set, and remembered how much she loved to paint. Soon after that she started her online Etsy shop at <goosi.etsy.com>, and realized how inspiring it was to have positive feedback from customers.

With subjects ranging from kittens to tigers and dogs to elephants, interspersed with beautiful botanicals, Evgenia’s “Goosi” shop offers both prints and original artworks for every room in your house, and suitable for many special occasions. She also accepts custom orders, and judging from the comments online, she doesn’t disappoint. As always, her coordinates are on the back of her Artist Trading Card at the top of the page.



## Gifts for Art Lovers

- Hand-sculpted lamps, plaques & drawings by Richard Gill, Bittersweet.....\$100-875
- Diane Woodward’s miniature works in big bold colours, Concave Gallery.....\$60-100
- Fabulous encaustic paintings by Susan Ukkola, General Fine Craft.....\$325 & up
- Framed works by Judi Miller, MVTM Gift Shop.....\$160
- Trees on wood. Various and custom sizes, S.M.art Gallery.....various
- Gallery gift certificates, Sivarulrasa Gallery.....\$100
- Art & craft kits for all ages, The Book Nook & Other Treasures.....various



GAYLE KELLS



MICHAEL PITTMAN



MIRANA ZUGER

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NOV 9 - DEC 30, 2022



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virtualgallery.sivarulrasa.com



**WHO** Evgenia Badiyanova  
**WHAT** Watercolour Artist  
**WHERE** Home studio in Carleton Place, Arts Carleton Place Events <artscarletonplace.com/evgenia-badiyanova>  
**WHEN** Any time at <goosi.etsy.com>; <instagram.com/goosiart>; <evgenia@goosi.art>  
**WHY** "It really makes me happy when customers respond so positively — I'm grateful to make a difference in someone's day."

ARTIST TRADING CARD

# Harmony Concerts Presents Lynn Miles and Anna Ludlow

Harmony Concerts, a boutique series operating in and around the Ottawa area, is presenting two outstanding seasonal events at Studio Theatre Perth. The first takes place on December 15 and features award-winning, and always entertaining, Lynn Miles. The second will close out Harmony Concerts' 2022 series at the theatre on December 17 with award-winning Celtic star Anna Ludlow.

Lynn Miles will be accompanied by the Crusty Mittens String Quartet for her show *Winter*. She wrote this secular Christmas show for friends, dysfunctional families, barflies, melancholy poets, loners, scrooges and snow angels. She has been performing it for seven years and adds a song each year, hoping to connect to as many seasonal emotions as possible. Miles is a self-proclaimed Christmas freak who loves the lights, the melancholia, and even the snow at Christmas, but then "I just want it to vanish the next day, and because it doesn't, I remain inconsolable 'til spring." She adds: "It's funny, and it's a joy to play music with an amazing band." Lynn has a live album version of *Winter* that you can buy and take home for your holiday collection. She will be releasing her 16<sup>th</sup> solo album, entitled *Tumbleweedyworld*, at the end of February on True North Records.

This show starts at 7:30PM at Studio Theatre Perth.



Harmony Concerts brings Lynn Miles to Perth on December 15 with her show *Winter*. Then on December 17 you can catch Anna Ludlow's East Coast Christmas Kitchen Party! Both shows take place at Studio Theatre Perth.

Anna Ludlow has been captivating audiences throughout North America and Europe for over 25 years. Her collaboration with some of eastern Canada's most renowned artists led to her being the principal fiddler in the Juno-nominated production of *Drum* and the popular production of *Come From Away* in Toronto. Anna brings an East Coast Christmas Kitchen Party to the Studio Theatre in Perth on December 17. The theatre will be filled with Celtic sounds and music, highland and step dancing, and a ton of fun. Anna loves audience participation, and it pumps her adrenaline for the next song! Anna's favourite time of the year is Christmas — she says: "It is a time to reflect on our gifts and blessings and I think it's a time to slow down during a concert to reflect on that. I love performing for folks and hope I can bring some peace, love and joy to their hearts." Anna is working on a brand-new CD to be released in late 2023, and maybe even a Christmas album in time for next year!

Anna Ludlow's East Coast Christmas Party starts at 7PM.

Tickets for both shows are available online at <harmonyconcerts.ca>, or at the door — but only if they are not sold out. WhatsApp Harmony Concerts at 613-229-3883 to order by phone.



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# The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

Presented by the Smiths Falls Community Theatre

The Smiths Falls Community Theatre is pleased to present *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. This heartwarming comedic play is adapted from the young adult book by Barbara Robinson. It is being directed by Liz Stienberg and Brittany Wiessler.

Helen Armstrong is the chief organizer of the church. She organizes everything from potluck suppers to the Christmas Pageant. Things go awry when Helen breaks her leg and has to find another woman to direct the pageant. Grace Bradley steps in and things go from bad to worse when the town's roughest and most delinquent children, the Herdmans, learn that free treats and drinks are provided to children who join the play. The Herdmans (Ralph, Imogene, Leroy, Claude, Ollie and Gladys) muscle themselves into the main parts and the Christmas Pageant takes on a story all its own.

Come join us to watch the chaotic run-up to this blessed event. The cast includes a dysfunctional Mary who smokes, gulps communion wine and fights with Joseph; restless angels; sheepless shepherd Wise Men who could possibly be referred to as the Worst Men; and one very overbearing Angel of the Lord.

Of course the story ends on a magical, heartwarming note with the true meaning of Christmas shining through for all to see. This is a play that will send you home with a smile on your face and a tear in your eye. Spend an evening or afternoon with us and leave with the Christmas spirit warming your heart.

This show runs on December 2, 8 and 9 at 7:30PM, with Saturday and Sunday matinées on December 3, 4, 10 and 11. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$10 for students. We are also accepting 2020 Season vouchers. There is assigned seating for this show, and tickets can be selected and paid for at Special Greetings, 8 Russell Street East in Smiths Falls. You can also order your tickets online with a credit card or PayPal at <smithsfallstheatre.com>. Phone orders are also available at 283-2244. If tickets are still available, they can also be purchased a half-hour before



This comedic play about a Christmas pageant that seems to be going horribly awry ends on a heartwarming note that will fill you with the holiday spirit! It opens at the Station Theatre on December 2.

showtime at the door of the Station Theatre (53 Victoria Avenue). Telephone or in-person is the best option if you are using vouchers, wanting to pay by cash, or if you have special seating requirements or requests. For more information, please visit <smithsfallstheatre.com>.

— Submitted by Smiths Falls Community Theatre

# Service of Nine Lessons & Carols

By Peter Woodwark

40 is a lot of years. Half a life, most of one's working life, the age at which one might get some sense. And this will be the 40<sup>th</sup> Christmas that the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols will be sung at St. James' Anglican Church in Perth.

During those 40 years over ten thousand, young and old, have come to hear the comfortable readings of the Christmas story, to sing the old familiar carols, and to listen to the choir interpret seasonal anthems very old and just old, just new and hot off the press.

The choir? It's the combined voices of St. Paul's United Church and St. James' Anglican Church, over 30 singers. A few sang in the beginning (so to speak), but most have added themselves to the fab sound over the years by singing in the respective church choirs year-round. And believe it or not, both directors are originals (again, so to speak) — Brad Mills at St. Paul's and Peter Woodwark at St. James' having guided, broadened, and cajoled the choirs for more than those 40 years. Our tradition of guests also continues. This year our guests will be the St. Paul's Barbershop Octet.

So please join us — live and in-person again after two years of Covid — on Sunday, December 18 at 7:30PM. Same place: St. James' on Drummond Street in Perth — the tall stone church beside the courthouse.



Peter Woodwark rehearses some of the members of the St. James' Anglican Church choir

Arrive early to get a good seat and to hear a selection of French-Canadian Christmas carols on the organ. There will be a freewill offering, and please bring a mask just in case.



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**December**

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Nick of Time Craft Sale Dec. 3	Perth Citizens' Band Concert Dec. 4	Elves on the Streets of Perth Dec. 17	Polar Bear Plunge Jan. 1

You can also enjoy free public skating at the Perth Community Centre on Saturdays from 5-6 pm and on Sundays from 1-2 pm, sponsored by Norwood & Co. and Perth Firedaws.

Learn more at [PERTH.ca/HOLIDAYEVENTS](http://PERTH.ca/HOLIDAYEVENTS)

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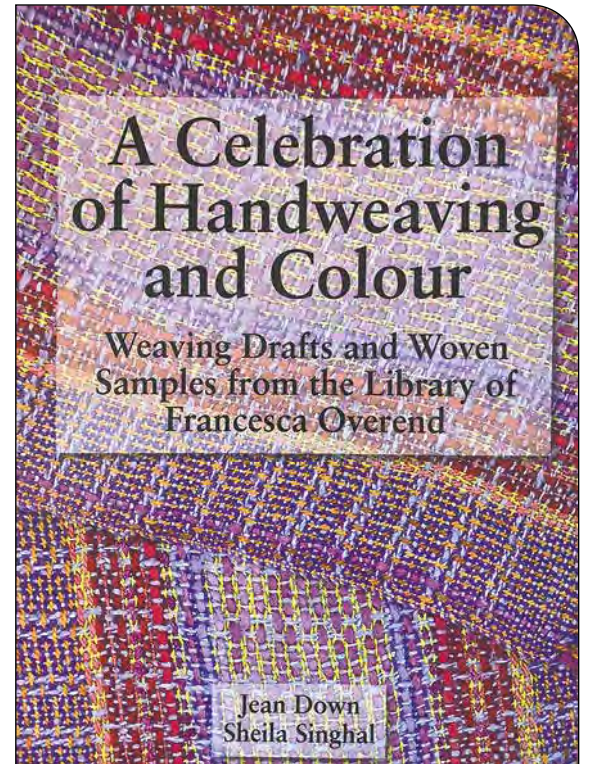
# Book Honouring Local Weaver at Textile Museum

A new book entitled *A Celebration of Handweaving and Colour: Weaving Drafts and Woven Samples from the Library of Francesca Overend*, by Jean Down and Sheila Singhal, is now available from the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum (MVTM) for \$35 (tax included, shipping extra). All proceeds will be donated to the Museum with thanks to Down and Singhal, friends of Francesca Overend (1934–2019). Born in Romania, Overend was a dedicated civil servant whose travels greatly influenced her innovative weaving style. She started weaving in the 1970s and continued until a few months before her passing. Becoming deeply involved in Ottawa's local weaving community, Overend was always seeking new techniques and designs, and never stopped learning and experimenting. The result was a vast collection of weaving drafts and samples that Down and Singhal hope will serve as inspiration to all who pick up the book.

This richly illustrated volume provides readers with ample opportunity to put their creativity to work, while reflecting upon Overend's own creativity and curiosity in technique, pattern and colour. Written for all levels of weavers and showcasing the many possibilities of this textile art, *A Celebration of Handweaving and Colour* is also a celebration of Francesca Overend. The MVTM is pleased to feature this book, as the museum featured many of Overend's spectacular woven pieces over the years.

Alissa Overend, Francesca's daughter, says: "The book is a beautiful compilation of texture and colour, a testament to our mother's passion for both and an homage to her many years of weaving. Our sincerest thanks to Jean, Sheila, and everyone who helped bring this book to print — it is a real treasure."

Michael Rikley-Lancaster, Executive Director/Curator of the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, adds: "Francesca was a friend of the Museum, and we



are so happy that her work is able to live on through this book and through weavers who take inspiration from her long years of artistry. Jean and Sheila have compiled a wonderful homage to an accomplished weaver, and we thank them for their generosity in donating the proceeds to the Museum."

The Mississippi Valley Textile Museum is committed to collecting, preserving and telling the stories of the local mill workers and labour history, while offering an open, inclusive space for the local community and visitors from across the globe. For more information, please visit [mvtm.ca](http://mvtm.ca).

## Gifts for Lovers of Sweet Treats

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# Perth's Charm Sure to Get You in the Holiday Spirit

As the flurries begin to fly, Perth's charming town transforms into a scene from a snow globe — with twinkling lights, smiling faces and the sound of Christmas carols.

A number of events are taking place throughout the month of December, ranging from carefully-curated craft markets to fireworks displays and sightings of Santa's elves. The holiday spirit is sure to surround you as you enjoy some heartwarming, family-friendly fun.

Stroll the streets and enjoy the old-world charm of Perth's downtown. Filled with boutiques and shops, they're bursting with gifts for everyone on your list! Need a break from holiday shopping? Warm up with a beverage at a café, stop for a meal at one of the

numerous restaurants and eateries, or sample some of the unique offerings at the local craft breweries and distillery.

As you wander through the beautiful historic downtown, be sure to take in the new light installation in Stewart Park. A number of trees are illuminated, creating a truly magical scene. The Town of Perth would like to thank the Downtown Heritage Perth BIA and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario for providing funding toward the project.

Experience the magic of the holiday season in Perth. Visit [perth.ca/holidayevents](http://perth.ca/holidayevents) for more information and to stay-up-to-date on details.

## Gifts for Kids & Teenagers

- "Star Wars" set of 12 commemorative banknotes in gold foil, Alliance Coin.....\$50
- Rebel Refinery lipbalm, Dandelion Foods .....\$4.95
- Comics and graphic novels, The Book Nook & Other Treasures.....\$7.99 & up
- Patagonia fleece, Vamos Outdoors .....\$109-149

## Gifts for Lovers of Vintage Treasures

- Vintage glass ware, Electric Catwalk.....\$5-40
- Vintage ironing board table, Darrell Thomas Textiles.....\$100
- Authentic ancient Roman coins, Alliance Coin & Banknote.....\$40 & up
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# Make-A-Wish Helps Ottawa Valley Kids

Darlene Bennett moved to the Almonte/Carp area five years ago, and recently reached out to theHumm to see if we would help promote Make-A-Wish Canada. We thought that the holidays were the perfect time to get people thinking about helping others, so we contacted Darlene to find out more about this very special charity.

**theHumm: In a nutshell, what does Make-A-Wish Canada do for kids, and who does it serve?**

Darlene Bennett: Make-A-Wish grants life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. We are on a quest to bring every eligible child's wish to life. Make-A-Wish serves children between the ages of 3 and 17 years of age.

by Kris Riendeau

**What prompted you to first volunteer with and then work for this organization?**

I first volunteered for Make-A-Wish after understanding what they do for children and families who are coping with unimaginable and heartbreaking situations. As a mom, this resonated with me. I wanted to help lighten their load in any way I could. After being in the high-tech sector for over 25 years, I knew it was time to apply my energy and skills to a more personally meaningful role in my community.

**What are some moments that have stood out for you over the years that you have been involved with Make-A-Wish?**

The children's faces when they receive their wish... the family joy. Each time I am part of a wish reveal I see faces light up, and weight lifted off of the child's and family's shoulders. When children spend the majority of their time at doctor appointments, receiving treatment or countless medical interventions, the routine can become brutal. Knowing they have a wish in the making gives them a renewed sense of hope for the future. Receiving the wish interrupts the difficult routines they have faced and brings pure happiness to their lives along with a positive attitude for their future. Wishes DO come true!

**Can you give our readers some examples of how the charity has impacted the lives of kids in this area?**

Sure, that's easy. I've delivered a wish to a young woman who was heading off to college the following year, but who did not have a laptop nor electronic "gear" suitable for the transition. Make-A-Wish was able to deliver an Apple package with every product imaginable to help her succeed. Another child requested a backyard renovation with play

structures suited to his unique ability — memories will be created there!

The picture here is of a recent wish for Ella, who is a BIG *Star Wars* fan. Because we are able to grant travel wishes again, we surprised Ella at her school by sending Storm Troopers to her classroom, requesting she follow them to the library. There she found family, friends and M-A-W staff surprising her with balloons, Disney luggage, and the details on her wish-come-true to go to Disney/Universal!

**What kind of support does Make-A-Wish need, and where can readers go to help?**

Make-A-Wish is always happy to have volunteers to help make wishes come true, and always needs people or businesses to donate wish items and services. We are currently in need of contractors and renovation experts, and of course we need donors. We hope people choose Make-A-Wish as their charity of choice this holiday season. We also encourage community-based fundraisers and have loads of information on how you can create your own!

Check out all the details at <makeawish.ca>.



Some very special helpers recently made Ella's wish come true

## Gifts to Calm & Soothe

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- Thymes Aqua Coralline body wash, Dragonfly Boutique.....\$30.99
- Lucky Clover Canadian beeswax candles, Foodsmiths.....\$19.99-32.99
- Lanark sheepskin slippers, Riverguild Fine Crafts.....\$98
- "Fall Lake View" by Barbara Gamble, Sivarulrasa Gallery.....\$700
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# Moonlight & Mistletoe Market Night in Arnprior

The Greater Arnprior Chamber of Commerce will present the Moonlight & Mistletoe Market, taking place in downtown Arnprior on Thursday, December 15 beginning at 4PM. The event will feature Christmas caroling by the Arnprior Community Theatre, visits with Santa Claus, late-night shopping, gift wrapping at ChrisTina Studio in support of the Arnprior Foodbank, and so much more.

The Greater Arnprior Chamber of Commerce is proud to bring Moonlight & Mistletoe Market to the community for the third year in a row. The event was first started as a way to spread extra holiday cheer and help businesses during the first year of the pandemic. In the third year of this event, they are aiming to continue to bring support to the business community, but to also bring some added holiday cheer. They are thankful to businesses in the community for joining in to put on this great event.

More details about the Moonlight & Mistletoe Market can be found at <a href="http://gacc.ca">gacc.ca</a>.

— Submitted by the Greater Arnprior Chamber of Commerce



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- Gift cards**, Black Tartan Kitchen..... various
- Fluid solar-roasted coffee**, Dandelion Foods ..... \$16.95 & up
- Gift cards**, Good Food Co. .... various
- Artizen Kombucha raspberry hibiscus stubby**, North Folk Café & Bakery ..... \$5

## Gifts for Lovers of Cozy Spaces

- Alpaca duvets**, Ballintotas Alpacas ..... \$435 & up
- Beautiful angel tree toppers**, Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm..... \$19-88
- 100% cotton throw quilts**, Mariposa Design..... \$69.95
- Cozy holiday sitting by the fireplace at the café**, North Folk Café & Bakery..... Priceless!
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**Joanne Beaton**  
**A Poem for the Season**  
 (with apologies to Clement Clarke Moore...)  
 'Twas the night before New Year, and all through the town,  
 The only thing happening was me taking signs down,  
 Changing over the logos, lickety-split,  
 'Cause I've joined a new brokerage — it's got to be quick!  
 The Sellers were nestled all snug in their beds  
 While visions of SOLD signs danced in their heads;  
 The Buyers (convinced that the market was bleep)  
 Had just settled down for a long winter's sleep.  
 To celebrate this change and the year we've all had,  
 My gift to the community (which isn't too bad),  
 To my White-Tail Ridge neighbours, and kids filled with glee,  
 Is horse-drawn sleigh-rides — absolutely free!  
 When the fun is all over, we'll hear a quick whistle,  
 And away they will trot like the down of a thistle.  
 And then I'll exclaim, at the end of 2022,  
 "Merry Christmas to all, and a Happy New Year too!"

JOANNE BEATON  
 exp REALTY  
 HERITAGE PERTH

theHumm Interview

# Fabulous Artist for Hire!

Colleen Gray, the wonderful local artist who founded and runs Art For Aid <artforaid.ca>, has started a new venture to help her put some funds in the bank so she can continue to work with that organization as a full-time volunteer. She is now hiring herself out for AGM, corporate and business events to do live painting, where the finished piece can be auctioned or won by draw.

Having profiled Colleen in our August 2020 issue, theHumm reached out to find out more about her new initiative.



Colleen Gray, founder of Art for Aid <artforaid.ca>, is doing live painting sessions at corporate and business events

by Kris Riendeau

**theHumm: Who is your target audience for this service?**

Colleen Gray: I live in Lanark County near Carleton Place, Perth and Smiths Falls and within an hour of Ottawa. I am available for hire to offer live painting events for large gatherings. If you are hosting an AGM or corporate event, you can give your attendees/participants a unique experience where they can watch a work of art being created from start to finish. This is a wonderful way for an organization to raise funds or support a charitable cause.

**How does it work?**

I would do a live painting session during the event, and the resulting painting can be won through a benefit draw or auction at the end.

Throughout the evening, my art table is publicly accessible so the group can watch the progress of the work as it develops. For a set fee, I will complete an art piece in the agreed upon timeframe. The finished artwork is signed, framed and certified at the end of the session so the winner can go home with a lovely piece of fine art that's ready to hang.

If the location's technology allows it, a camera can be placed over the painting, and progress can be watched on screens at the venue.

**How did this idea come about?**

I did this recently in Prescott-Russell and it was a huge hit, so I thought it would be a great way for me to generate an income because Art for Aid is entirely volunteer-run.

**Where can people find more information?**

To book your live painting event, contact me at <colleengrayart@gmail.com> or find more information at <colleengrayart.ca/pages/hire-an-artist>. You can also see my art at a show running at the Perth & District Union Library until February 1.

**I love that you are offering this service to support your volunteer habit. Can you tell us a bit about Art for Aid and its mission?**

The Art For Aid Project works to support Canadian First Nations, Inuit and Métis art and cultural education programs through access to quality program supplies, awareness and fundraising efforts. We work to connect Indigenous youth to art and knowledge of their culture. We seek to accomplish this by ensuring that quality art and program supplies are available to Indigenous youth and schools in remote areas. Donations can be made by selecting "Art for Aid" under the program tab of at <ilovefirstpeoples.ca> or <ilfp.ca>.

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# The Faces of Almonte Country Haven

During what seems like ages ago when communities were in lockdown, many people in our community were hit by Covid-19 with devastating consequences, while others sought to help members who were most vulnerable and at-risk. Residents came together to meet needs — making masks, delivering groceries, and providing some reprieve through companionship, albeit distanced.

Covid is still with us, but we can come together physically now to reflect on 2020 and pay respect to all those people whose lives were affected by the devastating virus, through an exhibit of portraits of residents of Almonte Country Haven by local artist Lynn Melbourne. The exhibit consists of portraits of ACH residents, along with Covid-related photographs by Ryan Gordon also taken at that time.

The idea for a portrait series first came to Lynn in 2019. She had wanted to do portraits of elderly people, motivated by her mother's experience of living in a long-term care home in Ottawa. Spending as much time with her as she could, Lynn found that although many, including her mother, had dementia, they were still individuals with feelings and emotions. Their personalities and circumstances had changed, but they were still there, and they were vulnerable. Through the portrait series Lynn hoped to capture the essence of each individual — to acknowledge them without judgement, giving them dignity and respect. Looking through photos on Facebook of people living in Almonte Country Haven, she observed people holding puppies, eating ice cream, and being cared for. She planned to meet residents, talk to them, take pictures, then paint the portraits in her studio. Lynn did a few sketches and was going to contact ACH. Then Covid struck, and Almonte Country Haven was among the first facilities to be hit hard.

ACH put out a request for gloves and masks. Lynn had some to donate, so she contacted the Administrator, Carolyn Della-Foresta. Things were getting worse and worse there. It was then she asked if she could have permission to go through their photos online and do portraits from them. Not knowing any of the residents' names, Lynn began the work, sending copies of the portraits to Carolyn with the idea that they might bring a little cheer. Eventually, Carolyn would send her specific photos to do. The



A very special exhibition of portraits of Almonte Country Haven residents, painted by Lynn Melbourne, will be open to the public at the Textile Museum from December 20–22

project became a labour of love, because as she was doing the portraits she felt she was getting to know the residents and their caregivers who give so much of themselves. By contrast, she felt her part was easy.

Lynn ended up painting 45 pastel portraits based on the photos, and Carolyn shared the pictures with residents, families and staff. In their many emails they talked about having an exhibit “when Covid was over”. The original portraits would then be given to the families. Little did they know, Covid would go on and on.

Two years later, the exhibit of portraits is now going to take place at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, along with photographs by Ryan Gordon of the front-line workers and volunteers in Mississippi Mills during the early lockdowns. Primarily a portrait and fashion photographer, Ryan wanted to practice and experiment with landscapes, architecture and people to capture the moment of Mississippi Mills in lockdown. The photos from the beginning of the series were never intended to be seen — they were simply practice shots. However, when he began to edit them eight months later, he noticed they reflected an expression of the mood of the community.

Now once again, community members have generously stepped up to help, this time by providing funds to buy materials for frames to protect and preserve Lynn's delicate dry pastel portraits. Lynn is also grateful to Phil Wood who did a wonderful job of framing them. Phil was able to get the materials at cost, and did not charge for his labour.

Although the exhibit focuses on the residents, families and staff of Almonte Country Haven, most people in our little town have been affected by the pandemic and will find the exhibit relatable, offering the community an opportunity to meet, share stories and help bring closure. All are welcome to attend the exhibit on December 20, 21 and 22, from 1–4PM. December 23, from 1–4PM, is reserved exclusively for residents, families and staff of Almonte Country Haven.

The Mississippi Valley Textile Museum is located at 3 Rosamond Street East in Almonte, and directions can be found at <mvtm.ca>. Masks are highly recommended.



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# Season's Greetings from MMLT

As 2022 comes to a close, the staff and directors at Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust (MMLT) want to personally thank everyone for your support. Whether you came out to enjoy a walk at one of our properties, supported us with a financial contribution, or participated in one of our organized events, you helped us to protect and steward land in this unique and beautiful region of Ontario.

Land trusts like MMLT have never played such a critical role for the future of our planet as they do right now. As the news of climate change and biodiversity loss mounts, the conservation of ecologically sensitive lands through land trusts provides a vital solution to these challenges. Land trusts help by directly protecting wildlife and important carbon stores. And, most of all, as people visit and enjoy these protected areas, they become the stewards for the environment that we so urgently need.

This same care for the earth and hope for the future is shared by our newest property donors, the Noyes-Brown family. This past year, Noel and Janet Noyes-Brown made a significant contribution to conservation by donating 200 acres of wilderness to MMLT. We have named this newest property Marble Woodlands, home to thousands of species of plants and animals, of which 300 have been documented, and our assessment will find many more.

Hoping that others could one day appreciate and enjoy the land as much as they do was the inspiration for donating this unique piece of land to conservation. Noel invites you to come and walk the property throughout the year, as in his words "each season



"Marble Woodlands", the 200-acre property recently donated to MMLT by Janet and Noel Noyes-Brown, will be open to the public soon!

offers its own unique set of sights, sounds and smells". For Janet, one of her fondest memories was going out at nighttime and hearing the barn owls calling and answering from the woods, while also hearing a pack of wolves howling and yelping in the distance. Janet and Noel love telling stories about the wide variety of animals they've encountered here over the years — everything from red-tailed hawks and herons to bears, moose and groundhogs. Stay tuned for an announcement later this year on when Marble Woodlands will be open to the public!

For more information about MMLT, or to enquire about donating, please visit <mmlt.ca>.

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Watuko bamboo fleece headgear, Dragonfly Boutique.....	\$19.99
Donations in their name, Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust.....	various
Canadian dog coats & snoods, Natural Pet Foods.....	\$12.99 & up
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Saute Mouton winter boots, made in Canada, Vamos Outdoors.....	\$300-390




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# The Blakeney Project: Report for Year Two

Many in our community are aware of The Blakeney Project of the Lanark County Food Bank (The Hunger Stop) as a result of walking, cycling or driving past our two-acre field that fronts on Blakeney Road on the east side of Blakeney. We have now completed our second full year of operation and are quite excited about developments this year — we were able to harvest over 10,000 pounds of fresh produce for Food Bank clients

by David Hinks

and we were able to connect in new ways with the community through the development of partnerships with the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, the Dave Smith Treatment Centre and Climate Network Lanark.

First, a bit of history. Generous landowners and grant money from federally funded programs allowed the Hunger Stop to transform a two-acre field into a gardening paradise in 2021. The land is a small irregularly shaped parcel squeezed between a county road and a 30-foot-deep ravine. It is not suitable for modern industrial agriculture, and for the previous twenty or more years it had been used mainly for sheep pasturing. An important part of the project is a 3000-square foot metal-clad pole barn that provides lockable storage for tools and equipment, storage for straw, eavestrough to collect rainwater, water storage tanks and pump, room to lay out vegetables to dry and cure, and work space for volunteers.

With the federal grant we were able to purchase a large rototiller, a lawn tractor, a yard cart, hand tools, three large water tanks, work benches, a work shed, a large quantity

of organic straw, seeds, seedlings and an irrigation system. In 2022 we added a fourth 1250-gallon water storage tank.

In its first year, the project was wildly successful. We harvested 18,000 pounds of produce and had over thirty volunteers committing to weekly three-hour shifts. That first year was a bit of an experiment — we did not really know what the very heavy clay soil would produce. Although it is hard to till and work with, it is amazingly fertile and holds unbelievable amounts of moisture. We accepted thousands of donated seedlings and planted them all. The results were not uniform — all the cucumber plants died, the eggplant did not set fruit, but the amazing harvests of beans, zucchini, butternut squash and tomatoes overwhelmed volunteers at the Food Bank who were responsible for distributing and processing this abundance.

Our Board of Directors and Manager insisted on a bit more planning and that we try to tailor our plantings to client needs and wants. We also decided to say no to donors who offer thousands of their surplus seedlings — apparently we didn't really need 150 eggplant seedlings!

Production in 2022 was considerably less than 2021, but we were much more successful at producing the vegetables that clients wanted and spreading out the production so that Food Bank volunteers were not overwhelmed. We grew a lot more onions, garlic, pumpkins, rutabaga and peppers in 2022 and planted more cover crops that will be worked in to improve the structure of the soil. We grew disease-resistant tomato and pepper plants from seed ourselves. Squash, zucchini, carrots, cucumbers and melons did not do so well in 2022. More pests and perhaps

the alternating hot and cool weather in early summer were factors.

Back to the partnerships. The Textile Museum organized a dozen or so volunteers who were interested in growing plants that can be used to dye fabrics. The Blakeney Project provided 1,200 square feet of land and water. Textile Museum volunteers created four growing beds, seedlings and larger plants were carefully planted in the soil, and a roster of volunteers was set up to regularly weed, water and harvest seeds, roots and leaves. It has been a great learning experience for everyone with exchanges of knowledge and techniques between vegetable growers and flower growers — who knew that woad could be used to create a blue dye? This partnership has worked well for everyone and will likely be expanded next year with workshops.

The partnership with the Dave Smith Treatment Centre (DSTC) was a huge success for all involved. Teams came out to Blakeney on Saturdays, with females one Saturday and males the next. We had up to a dozen young adults with their staff each Saturday. It was a fantastic experience dealing with them. Most were keen to learn about growing food and enjoyed working in an outdoor environment. They were extremely polite, eager to please, very diligent weeders and quite hard working. It was quite moving, as some of the participants professed such gratitude for an opportunity that apparently they had never had before. There was a bit of a competitive spirit with both genders



Two of the many volunteers with The Blakeney Project

keen to learn that they had worked harder and accomplished more than the other. Staff of the DSTC noted that the partnership was very rewarding, as they are always striving to develop healthy life skills for their youth. They are looking forward to continuing the partnership.

The third partnership is with the composting team at Climate Network Lanark. They have arranged for the “waste” streams of Hummingbird Chocolate and Equator Coffee to be delivered to the Blakeney site and added to our 40-foot-long compost pile. Cocoa shells and coffee grounds are layered with garden refuse in an aromatic blend that promises an amazing crop next season.

We have had around 50 volunteers involved in different aspects of the Blakeney Project. There are about 30 volunteers who got down and dirty with a three-hour shift once a week. Others get involved in planning and other short-term projects. While some were experienced, most were not. If you are interested in being part of our project in the future, please phone the Lanark County Food Bank (the Hunger Stop) at 257-8546.

## Holiday Sale!

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# Food Bank Fundraiser by EXIT Realty

For many people, the holidays inspire feelings of charity and good will. As needs are also high during that time of year, Wendy Ronberg, Broker Owner of EXIT Realty Vision Brokerage in Carleton Place, and the agents of the brokerage are once again looking to raise money for the Lanark County Food Bank.

Last year EXIT Realty Vision was honoured to be able to partner with The Hunger Stop – Lanark County Food Bank. This charity has been under enormous strain over the last few years. As a new brokerage in this community, EXIT Realty Vision wanted to make a big impact and help the community that had so warmly welcomed them. Their enthusiastic team volunteered their time and energies by setting up an EXIT Realty Vision tent in both the communities of Almonte and Carleton Place where they sold (by donation) cookies, candy canes and hot chocolate. Don't forget the whipped cream! Through these events a whopping \$5,915 was raised. At EXIT Realty, a portion of every transaction fee received by EXIT Realty Corp. International is applied to its charitable fund. Through the "Spirit of EXIT Dollar-for-Dollar Matching Program", EXIT offices and associates can raise money for local, approved registered charities and apply to EXIT's head office to have those funds matched from the company's pool of funds. Wendy and her team hoped to raise \$5,000, which EXIT's head office was proud to match, however they raised \$5,915 for a total donation of \$10,915 to the Lanark County Food Bank.

Wendy and her team say: "We can't thank the people of Lanark County enough — not only for welcoming us in but also for the enormous support and generosity they have shared with us. From children donating allowance money to large online donations, we were truly brought to tears. At a time when we have all been feeling physically alone and disconnected from our community, this fundraising event has shown incredible spirit and a willingness to join hands and connect with those in our community who need it."

This year they are hoping to beat last year's total. Exit Realty Corp., through the Spirit of EXIT, has agreed to money-match again. Donations can be made until January 11, 2023, using e-transfer at <lcfb.thehungerstop@gmail.com>. Be sure to enter "Exit Realty Vision" in the message/notes section so your donation will be matched!



By donating to the Lanark County Food Bank through EXIT Realty's initiative, you can double the impact!

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## Gifts to Lift the Spirits

- Even if you don't buy a bra, Kathy will tell a funny story, 8008 Lingerie ..... Priceless!
- Jim Shore's beautiful ornaments and figurines, Mariposa Design ..... \$30-230
- Donations in their name, Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust ..... various
- Sticky buns!, North Folk Café & Bakery ..... \$5.99
- Art class – a day exploring new techniques and colour!, S.M.art Gallery ..... \$325-500
- "Wild Strawberries" by Karen Haines, Sivarulrasa Gallery ..... \$480
- A variety of unique new and used books for all ages, Spark Books & Curios ..... various

## Gifts Made in the Valley

- Deluxe meat and cheese package, Back 40 Artisan Cheese ..... \$95
- Centrepieces made with fresh greenery, Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm ..... \$28-88
- Bamboo fleece Cuddle Crop sweater with "hoodie" neckline, Duffield Design ..... \$159
- Sterling silver leaves pendant with "Madeira" citrine, Kehla Jewellery Design ..... \$575
- Donations in their name, Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust ..... various
- Handwoven wool/silk scarves, MVTM Gift Shop ..... \$125
- "Closing the Gap" by Mary Pfaff, Sivarulrasa Gallery ..... \$225
- Ken & Kristin's handmade soaps, The Queen's Crafters ..... \$5 & up




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# Holiday Pop-up Art Sale

Three studios in the Perth Autumn Studio Tour family will open their doors on Saturday, December 3 for a Holiday Pop-up Sale.

Celebrate and support your local makers this holiday by giving gifts that will nourish the soul and that are made by someone you actually know and/or interact with! Bring relationship back to exchange!

From east to west, you can visit Cordwood Studio (Zoë Lianga) with guest Bel Angeles. Find feltwork, preserves, frozen meals and paintings. It's located at 590 Brooke Valley Road and is open from 11AM to 4PM.

The next stop is Catherine Orfald's Studio with guest Rita Redner, where you'll find paintings and ceramics. This is at 1848 Old Brooke Road and is open from 11AM to 4PM.

The final stop is Susie Osler's Studio with guest Clarendon Herbals (Meghan Robinson). Ceramics, drawings, bookmarks by SGO, and herbal offerings will all be available at 2501 Old Brooke Road. This studio is open from 11AM to 5PM.



Find works by Susie Osler (above) and several other artists at the Pop-Up Art Sale in Brooke Valley on December 3



## Christmas Art and Craft Show

The S.M.art Gallery in Carleton Place is excited to invite you all to gather around the electric fireplace and celebrate the season with local artists, fine food and glasses full of good spirit.

Come and see the wonderful variety of creative handmade works of art! The show runs from December 2-4 and 9-11 at 50 Bennett Street, Unit 1. Visit <sarahmoffat.com> for times and details.

### Thank You, Humm Patrons!

Thanks so much to everyone who has come on board since we initiated our patronage campaign two years ago.

As things have continued to fluctuate, your support has been invaluable and heartening!

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 theHummm.

Thanks for *your* support!

### Gifts for Husbands & Significant Others

- Matching bra and panty set that's comfortable AND super sexy, 8008 Lingerie ..\$200
- Sports jerseys and memorabilia, Almonte Antiques & Collectibles .....\$5 & up
- Extra-heavy-duty terry socks, Ballintotas Alpacas .....\$38
- BN3TH underwear, Dragonfly Boutique.....\$35
- Cotton fleece Pekoe Patch sweater with elbow-patch detailing, Duffield Design \$175
- Series pass to four fabulous concerts, Folkus Concert Series.....\$110
- Elegant "Mondaine" watch with black leather strap, Kehla Jewellery Design.....\$425
- "Gift of Cheese" club subscription, Pêches & Poivre .....\$55 & up
- Pair of pewter goblets by Colin Hamer, Riverguild Fine Crafts.....\$130
- Glerup slippers, Vamos Outdoors.....\$99



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# Museum to Host Jolly Holiday Happenings

The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum invites you to take in the sights and sounds of the holidays from December 1–18 at 11 Old Slys Road.

The museum will be taking part in the Merry & Bright program this year, and has two boxes available for purchase. Box 1 is \$40 and is called the **Local Histories Box**, which includes: a hot chocolate bomb from the Rideau Candy Shoppe, a local history book (contact the museum for options), one museum membership, a custom museum sticker and an 8"x10" SF Retro photo print.

Box 2 is \$55 and is called the **Keep it Cozy Box**, which includes a hot chocolate bomb from the Rideau Candy Shoppe, a ball of handmade yarn from Jaymie Karn, a knitting or crochet hook, one museum membership, a custom museum sticker and a handmade holiday card. To purchase a Merry & Bright box, please contact the museum for details.

**Holiday tours** will be available at the Heritage House beginning on December 1 and will run until December 18. These tours will take you through the museum and share Victorian holiday traditions. To book a holiday tour, contact the museum.

The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum **Annual Art Show** will be on display in the museum's galleries until Saturday, December 17. The show features a variety of media and art from 33 artists from all across the Ottawa Valley.

On Sunday, December 11, the museum invites the community to tour through the stunningly decorated Victorian home while listening to Christmas carols and enjoying festive drinks and treats. The **Holiday Heritage House** will also include horse-drawn wagon rides and children's activities, including an elf scavenger hunt and a visit from our favourite jolly old soul. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for youth ages 5-12 and free for ages 4 and under. Tickets are available for purchase at <sfholidayheritagehouse.eventbrite.ca>.

The museum will also have a special mailbox set up outside for residents to drop off letters to Santa. The mailbox is located on the front deck of the museum



In addition to hosting an art show and holiday tours, Heritage House Museum is also participating in Smiths Falls' Merry & Bright program, with two lovely local boxes available for purchase!

and each letter dropped off from December 1-16 will receive a personalized message from Santa.

On December 17 the museum will host a **Centre-piece Workshop** with Florist Kelly Ilan. Kelly will help you create a one-of-a-kind centerpiece for the holidays using winter greenery and flowers, and teach participants how to make holiday bows. The workshop is \$65 per person. To register, contact the museum at 283-6311 or <heritagehouse@smithsfalls.ca>.

For more information about these holiday events, please contact the Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum by phone at 283-6311 or by email at <heritagehouse@smithsfalls.ca>.

## Gifts for Wives & Significant Others

- \$100 gift certificate (for \$80!), 8008 Lingerie .....\$80
- Jewellery by Anne Marie Chagnon & Argent Whimsy, Bittersweet.....\$30-200
- Designer 100% cashmere scarf, Darrell Thomas Textiles .....\$175
- Symphony Cardi in bamboo, with side-seam pockets, Duffield Design.....\$179
- Vintage purses, Electric Catwalk.....\$8
- Series pass to four fabulous concerts, Folkus Concert Series.....\$110
- Cozy silk & wool scarves handmade by Diane Lemire, General Fine Craft .....\$80 & up
- Yellow gold choker necklace with orange carnelian, Kehla Jewellery Design.....\$890
- Warm & cozy flannel infinity scarves with hidden pocket, The Plaid Cow .....\$55.95

## Handmade Gifts

- Handcrafted board with cheeses & local charcuterie, Back 40 Artisan Cheese .....\$100
- Hand-knit Ebb and Flow cowl, Ballintotas Alpacas.....\$50
- Thai Duponi silk scarf/shawl, Fine Batiks.....\$65
- Contemporary silver jewellery by Andrea Mueller, General Fine Craft.....\$65-380
- Mittens woven with spun wool, MVTM Gift Shop.....\$45
- Childhood memories on canvas by local artists, S.M.art Gallery.....various
- Large canvas tote bags, The Plaid Cow .....\$59.95-63.95



## Holiday Sale

December 9 to 11

Lansdowne Park Horticulture Building  
Free admission!

Fri Dec 9- 3 to 9pm  
Sat Dec 10- 10 to 6pm  
Sun Dec 11- 10 to 5pm

ottawaguildofpotters.ca

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Every Wed	<b>Wings 'n Tunes</b> + Open Mic with <b>Shawn McCullough</b> (Country) 5:30-8:30
Thu Dec 1	<b>Krief</b> (Indie Rock, Former Member of The Dears, Montreal) 6-9 \$10
Fri Dec 2	<b>Blues on the Rideau</b> with <b>Angeliq Francis Band</b> 7-11 \$100
Dec 2-3	<b>Holiday Shop 'n Hop Weekend</b>
Sat Dec 3	<b>Young Petty Stones</b> : Music of Neil Young, Tom Petty + The Rolling Stones (Montreal, Westport, Yarker) 7-11 \$80 + HST Dinner + Show
Mon Dec 5	+ Mon Dec 22 <b>Meghan Balogh + Martin Smit</b> (Celtic/Folk, Picton) 5-8
Tue Dec 6	<b>Jon McLurg</b> (Folk, Kingston) 5-8
Thu Dec 8	<b>Gerald McGrath</b> (Folk/Rock, Kingston) 5-8
Fri Dec 9	<b>Jeff Callery</b> (Country/Folk/Rock, Brockville) 5-9
Sat Dec 10	<b>East Coast Experience</b> (Ottawa) 7-11 \$80 + HST Dinner + Show
Mon Dec 12	<b>Spencer Scharf</b> (Folk/Rock, Ottawa) 5-8
Tue Dec 13	<b>Benni's Piano Bar</b> with <b>Benni Vander</b> (Member of Miss Emily, Picton) 5-8
Thu Dec 15	<b>Eric Uren &amp; Meghan Balogh</b> (Folk/Rock, Westport) 5-8
Fri Dec 16	<b>Doubleback</b> (Country feat. Shawn McCullough) 7-11 \$70 + HST Dinner + Show
Sat Dec 17	<b>80s Enuff</b> : Tribute to the 80s! (feat. Pat Murphy) 7-11 \$80 + HST Dinner + Show
Mon Dec 19	<b>Nolan Hubbard</b> (Indie Folk/Rock, Kingston) 5-8
Tue Dec 20	<b>Jon Jones</b> (Folk/Rock, Kingston) 5-8
Fri Dec 23	<b>Xmas Eve Jazz Night</b> with <b>Spencer Evans Trio</b> 7-10 \$15
Sat Dec 24	<b>Xmas Turkey Dinner Takeout</b> for Westport Food Bank 2-3, Reservations Only
Tue Dec 27	<b>Matt Dickson</b> (Classic Rock/Folk, Perth) 5-8
Thu Dec 29	<b>Cameron Wyatt</b> (Indie Folk/Rock, Kingston) 5-8
Fri Dec 30	<b>Logan Brown</b> (Funky Folk/Soul/Rock, Perth) 5-8
Sat Dec 31	<b>New Year's Eve</b> with <b>Young Petty Stones</b> : 7-1am \$110 + HST Dinner, Show, Party Favours + Midnight Toast

## The Smiths Falls Community Theatre Presents

### The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

By Barbara Robinson

Directed by Liz Stienberg & Brittany Wiessler

"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com - December 2022

**Dec 2 & 8,9 at 7:30 pm**  
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• smithsfallstheatre.com (Paypal/Visa/Mastercard)  
• By Phone - 613-283-0300 (Visa/Mastercard)  
• At the Door - 1/2 hour before performance (cash only)  
53 Victoria Avenue, Smiths Falls



# dOMe Retreat – Wait 'til You Hear This!

By Kris Riendeau

Have you ever heard someone describing visual art on the radio and thought “if only I could see what they are raving about”? As you read this article, please bear in mind that the experience described here truly needs to be heard to be appreciated. I’m going to do my best, but in this case a sonorously reverberating gong is worth a thousand words.

In mid-November, my husband Rob and I were in-between performance weekends for our show *Sketchy Santa* and were ramping up for the December issue of theHumm (which is always a doozy). We were tired and a bit frazzled, but we had been invited to visit the new dOMe Retreat by owner Sheila Brunke. We assumed that we would interview her and take photos, but instead Sheila led us down a path through the woods (encouraging us to strike some gongs hanging from trees along the way), invited us to settle into her spectacular geodesic dome, and treated us to an hour-long “sound bath” — a form of meditation assisted by sound waves. It was simultaneously completely relaxing and utterly captivating — like nothing we had ever experienced!

First let me set the stage. dOMe (so named because of both its shape and the resonance and connotations of the word *om*) is a majestic yet cozy geodesic dome located on Sheila’s property in rural Braeside. With assistance from her husband and friends, she built and furnished it over the course of the pandemic. Replete with repurposed and natural materials,

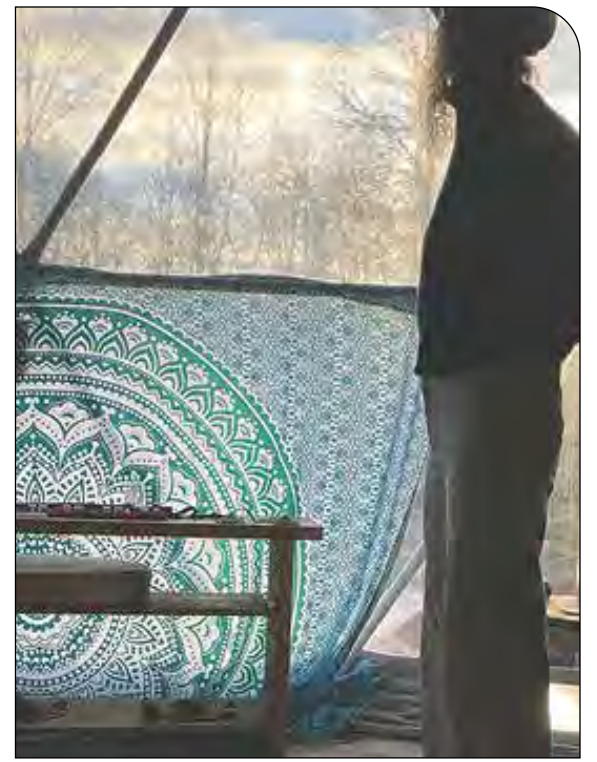


it boasts a fireplace, large windows and loft. We were invited to choose our spots, and although I beat Rob to the hammock, he insists that he was content with a comfy reclining chair. After Sheila gave us some brief information about what to expect, we closed our eyes, snuggled under our warm throws, and... listened.

Over the course of the next hour, our acoustic landscape featured crystal bowls, Tibetan singing bowls, gongs, an earth drum, rainsticks from the Africa Heartwood Project <a href="http://africaheartwoodproject.org">africaheartwoodproject.org</a>, ting shaws, chimes, weighted tuning forks (which are sometimes used on broken bones), and something that sounded like the ocean. When I asked about the latter, Sheila told me that the “ocean drum” was created by neonatal nurses to help soothe newborns, as it replicates the sound of blood and amniotic fluid flowing through the womb. As Rob and I rested with our eyes closed, Sheila played these instruments as she glided around the dome on bare feet — we were completely lost in the soundscape and almost forgot that she was there with us. The curved structure and lack of hard corners in the dome enhanced the experience, as each instrument seemed to resonate almost indefinitely.

When the sound bath was over, Sheila encouraged us to rouse ourselves gently and partake of a cup of guava strawberry ginger tea. Once we had returned from our blissful state to some semblance of normal, we asked her how dOMe came to be.

Sheila was first introduced to sound therapy in a salt room (halotherapy). She hadn’t expected sound to be part of the experience, but was mesmerized by it. Years later she started taking courses in sound therapy, and has continued to find herself drawn to instruments and different vibrations. Her goal with the dOMe Retreat is to create a space in nature that has a gentle footprint, where people can come to take steps along their wellness journey — to “level up” as she puts it, and become the next best version of themselves. She wants to help them find stillness and balance in these challenging times. Sheila is also



Sheila Brunke silhouetted against the afternoon sky in her cozy and acoustically stellar geodesic dome

keen on having her beautiful and serene space used by others for creative wellness, so she is open to hosting workshops by other practitioners.

The dome itself is created using as many natural materials as possible — she wryly calls the construction of it a “relationship-builder” for her and her husband, and recalls climbing it like monkey bars as they put up the insulation and canvas. She has planted rows of willow trees leading up to the dome, there is a gorgeous fire pit nearby where people can congregate, and she is in the process of designing a “wellness garden.” Even the adjacent toilet is an off-grid incinerator.

Each sound bath session is unique — there is no set score or formula that she follows. Sheila explains that she picks up on people’s energy and crafts the experience accordingly. One client described it as a “massage for my brain”, and Rob and I would agree with that assessment. Although we were completely relaxed throughout, there was a lovely sense of anticipation — awaiting the next auditory experience — that kept us aware and present throughout.

And if you are interested in having more than your brain massaged, Sheila also offers chair, relaxation, deep tissue and hot stone massage sessions. You can even combine a sound bath with a massage!

If my words have done their job and persuaded you to take a plunge into a sound bath (don’t worry — you keep your clothes on), check out the offerings at <a href="http://domeretreat.ca">domeretreat.ca</a> or email <a href="mailto:domeretreat@gmail.com">domeretreat@gmail.com</a> to book your session. But if you want to start by just dipping your toes in, dOMe is open to the public for 1.5-hour sound bath group sessions on Tuesdays starting at 4:30PM and on Sundays starting at 11AM. Please contact Sheila to reserve your spot, and tell her theHumm sent you!



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Habitat loss is just one of several factors contributing to the decline of evening grosbeak populations in North America

Bird Crazy

# Happy Wanderers: Evening Grosbeaks

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, English colonizers discovered a beautiful bird in the foothills of the Rockies. Under the mistaken impression that the bird would only make an appearance after sunset, they called it evening grosbeak. However, the bird's name in French — “gros-bec errant” — is much more accurate.

by Lise Balthazar

The French term “errant” means “wandering”, which perfectly describes this bird's unpredictable migratory movements. In fact, rather than being actual migrations, those movements are essentially focused on foraging for food.

Although they belong to the Fringillidae songbird family, evening grosbeaks don't have a specific song but rather a small range of very distinctive sweet notes, burry chirps and warbles.

The males are absolutely striking, with their velvety brown head and neck, mustard yellow underparts and upper back, jet black wings with prominent pure white patches, and bright yellow eyebrow which gives them an imposing and somewhat fierce look.

The females' colouring is more subtle but no less attractive: smoky gray plumage with a soft yellow wash on the nape, sides and rump, black and white wings with a rectangular patch.

Besides being a formidable tool to open any type of seed, the evening grosbeak's impressive chunky bill undergoes a transformation in the spring which makes it doubly useful: from its pale colour in the winter, it turns a delicate green. When the bird sits on the nest and lifts only its head, the beak resembles a young green spruce or balsam cone. Camouflage and protection at their best!

During summer, evening grosbeaks eat mainly defoliating insects, especially spruce budworm larvae; in fact, they are so skillful at finding these tiny pests that they often signal the beginning of a budworm outbreak. In winter, they show up irregularly at feeders;

they love sunflower seeds — especially when served on a platform feeder — and are also very fond of the seeds and berries of trees and shrubs.

Grosbeaks breed in conifer and mixed-wood forests across the boreal forest and western mountainous areas in North America. They are monogamous and their courtship is a very discreet affair. The female is the main nest builder, using material collected on the ground and twigs she breaks from trees. She places it high in a tree or shrub and lines it with grasses, lichens and pine needles. She lays two to five eggs and incubates them for about two weeks.

In the mid 1800s, evening grosbeaks were uncommon east of the Rockies. Their increasing presence in our part of the world is partly due to outbreaks of forest insects such as spruce budworm. In the '70s and '80s their range expansion reached a peak. Evening grosbeaks are now found in all Canadian provinces and territories except Nunavut.

Sadly, a 74% drop in the evening grosbeak population was documented between 1966 and 2019. Furthermore, a 2008 study of Project FeederWatch data showed a decrease in the grosbeak's winter range. Evening grosbeaks were reported at only half the number of sites, and flock sizes were down by 27% in the early 2000s compared with the late 1980s. In 2019, the grosbeaks were listed under Canada's Species at Risk Act. The Canadian government has established a management plan for these magnificent birds; you can read all the details by searching Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*): management plan proposed 2022 at <canada.ca>.

Habitat loss — a too-frequent scenario — is one of several factors threatening evening grosbeaks. Added to that are climate change, intensive farming, insecticide use, residential development, forestry practices and chemical spraying to control spruce budworm populations.

For all these reasons, it is crucial we take the necessary steps to protect these beauties so they may continue to brighten our winters with their cheery warbles and striking colours.

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The Reever Report

# It's Back Already?

When did this happen? Only last week I was getting out the garden tools, revving up the mower and planting some annuals. And now you're telling me I have to get out the winter gear? Suddenly, it's colder than... well, you know. I'm wrapping myself in strings of outdoor lights, and cursing the timer that turns the lights on in the day and off at dusk. On the decent November day when I could have done this in comfort, we were tooling around the countryside admiring the fall colour.

by Glenda Jones



Halloween came and went, and BOOM! There's Christmas on the doorstep. The seasonal magazines are throwing us into the perennial panic mode as if the whole holiday will collapse if everyone isn't worked to the bone to make it happen. They want everything "done ahead" from the mashed potatoes to the baking frenzy. Well, let's consider: if everything got "done ahead", what would you have likely been doing all those weeks ago? Maybe that was the time you planned to clean out the fridge, or do your nails, or find the snow shovels. There are only so many hours in a day, and I think every one was probably earmarked already, so "done ahead" isn't going to happen.

The same could be said for the snazzy giftwrap you're meant to create from a cut potato and finger paints. REALLY? Get out the gift bags and the Dollar Store tissue and call it festive — unless you are in charge of a few little kids who want a Grandma craft on a cold afternoon. They could likely whip you up a batch of Christmas cards too, since grandmas are probably the only people still sending those gems through the mail.

Every magazine worth the price will feature a cookie exchange. I recall one year when the exchange did not go well. One of the women was not a candidate for the Great British Baking Show, while the rest of us had worked diligently to create tasty masterpieces. We all had to go home with her offerings destined for the back of the cupboard, while she gained herself plates of very good unique things. The upshot? She had an Open House party, and we all recognized the baking!

Hostess gifts seem to be "de rigeur" according to the magazines. You're expected to have made Brandied Fruit, or clever assemblages of kitchen tools wrapped in a fancy tea towel, when in actual fact you can just whip into the closest LCBO and buy a bottle of wine. There's not a hostess anywhere who will turn that down. If I recall the ads in the *Food & Drink* magazine, that would be their choice of a clever gift as well.

Speaking of those ads, they are designed to lay on a guilt trip from which you can never hope to escape. Have you noticed the ecstatic groups of people, all dressed to the nines? They're holding glasses of lord-knows-what concoctions rimmed in sugar crystals, as they peruse a table laden with charcuteries of every imaginable kind. Laughing gaily at each other's bon mots, they while away their holiday evenings carefree of babysitters, dogs that need walking or snowstorms brewing outside. The rest of us are at home in our slippers wishing we could afford a red dress like that.

Heck, I'd be happy to have the figure that could wear it, let alone the dress itself. You just know those people are going home in their EV cars that can park themselves.

Now, you're probably despairing of my Scrooge-like Christmas spirit, but I do have one weakness regarding these magazines. Can you truly say you never rifled through the Sears catalogue as a little kid, picturing yourself playing with the best toys? Have you never imagined yourself in one of those sparkling evening gowns? Have you never wished for a dining room decked out in Christmas décor and fancy china? Of course, we all have. I love the back stories we can invent for the ads. We didn't have to decorate or bake, so we can enjoy the illusion and turn the page.

Further, I can never get enough of the Christmas stores, especially the greenery and aroma of a plant nursery that pulls out all the stops to decorate. Even shelves of sparkly lights and Christmas balls can give me shivers of delight. Less is not more, MORE is more! Pop up some trees and cover them tip to tail in ribbons and bows, pinecones and decorations, drape the whole thing in tinsel and turn on the little lights, and I'm in Christmas heaven. I've crammed boughs and branches into my porch planter, and then put diamond things on it, and then lights, and now I've got silver bows to add. I really must quit!

When you're feeling that you simply can't take any more of the schmaltzy music or the excess, you need to get outside and meet your neighbours. If you want a real treat, drive around our gorgeous little towns, Almonte in particular, and take in the fabulous displays people work to create. And if on Christmas Eve you are out walking, don't miss the area around Union Street with "Santa lights" along the street. It's magic for adults and little kids too excited to sleep on Christmas Eve.

Have a happy Christmas, however you celebrate, and don't get complacent, because before you know it, you'll have to put it all away and get ready for spring again. Time flies when you least expect it!

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- Lund silicone travel mug, Good Food Co..... \$22
- Canine Naturals hide-free chicken candy cane for dogs, Natural Pet Foods... \$9.99 & up
- Set of 3 reusable snack bags, The Plaid Cow ..... \$18





# Bill 23: More Strain on the Vulnerable and Our Natural World!

As we were going to press, the provincial government was trying to rush through Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act.

No doubt, we are in a housing crisis: the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Lanark County is \$1,796 a month; in 2022, the average sale price of a home in the County was \$736,424. Most likely, you know someone who is in a precarious housing situation.

by Chandler Swain

So “More Homes Built Faster” sounds pretty good, doesn’t it?

Unfortunately, the Bill is mis-named. It will not provide for more affordable housing; it will not meet the housing needs of our aging population; it will not construct the starter homes so many young families want; it will not produce the resilient and energy-efficient housing we know we urgently need in quantifiably more healthy, denser, walkable communities.

The Bill should have been called the Unleash the Climate Crisis, Wipe Out Wetlands, Extend Urban Sprawl, Take Away Citizen Rights Bill. Municipal, housing and environmental activists were stunned at its breadth and scope and the extent of the damage it would inflict and were working to rein in this terrible piece of legislation. The government gave no time for public consultation and attention to the solid research in many areas of this issue, sliding the bill into the small window of time when all municipal

governments were transitioning over the election period. The extent of the opposition was massive, with some thirty Mayors, Reeves and heads of Conservation Authorities in Eastern Ontario alone signing a letter of opposition, and many organizations like Climate Network Lanark submitting arguments against the Bill to various hearings and procedures.

What it will do is allow developers to build expensive homes, with far fewer controls on how they’re built, where they’re built — including on wetlands and farmland — and how they will impact our ability to protect ourselves from climate change in the near future — and with NO say about this from local citizens affected. There is also the expectation that existing residents will pay for the development costs (extending water, sewer, roads) through increased local taxes. Simcoe already expects local taxes to have to go up by 4% just for this. Our own local municipalities are looking at similar increases just from Bill 23, in addition to other regular costs.

My reaction to this potential development folly is coloured by having spent my childhood in a small town much like Almonte. On weekends I was a barn rat, cleaning stalls and waiting my turn to ride one of the rag-taggle horses at a local riding stable. I also spent many hours in school buses with my high school sports teams travelling to play against teams from the other small town high schools around Peel. However my town — Port Credit — being surrounded by numerous other small rurally-centered towns, had the misfortune to be within “commuting” distance to Toronto. Just before I moved away,

Square One was built — like a dystopian glass and metal stage set in the middle of large working farm fields. It was an exotic curiosity. By then the towns were amalgamated into what we now know as Mississauga. I go there to visit an old friend who still lives in what was charming Clarkson village. Getting there through the tangle of highways and big-box “smart (!!) centre malls” is really challenging and requires perfect focus on avoiding the big fast SUVs and trucks. It’s not fun.

One depressing feature of my former rurally-centered town is that it is indistinguishable from Barrhaven or Milton. Or Red Deer or Dartmouth. You get the idea. There’s barely a scrap of green space, and large endless swaths of huge brown roofs endlessly rolling across what was formerly the best farmland in North America, formed by retreating glaciers (I learned this in grade 9 geography at Lorne Park Secondary School — it is fabulously rich alluvial silt).

So I may have freaked out more about sprawl than many: I see it happening already in the wasteful “subdivisions” around our towns, knowing that without pushback the wetlands, forests and old farms will be swallowed up in a twinkling, driving all the ills that come from urban sprawl. Not the least of which is leaving out the folks who need decent affordable housing. Even this government’s own Housing Task Force called for less sprawl and more densification to create communities. This kind of housing is denser, walkable to shops and schools and recreation. And now we know absolutely nothing should be built that adds additional fossil fuel consumption for materials, heating, cooling and transportation.

I have heard repeatedly from colleagues in my work in the visual art world how much many of them would love to move to Almonte or other of our attractive towns in Lanark County, but already they are priced out and can’t pursue their creative, entrepreneurial work when it’s too expensive to buy or rent a place to live. What a shame.

Further to this, we meet many folks who have retired and moved out here for the benefits of county living — using the conservation areas and enjoying the natural world amenities. I often wonder what they will think when their rural woodland havens are flattened for swaths of giant houses and more traffic.

In Lanark County, there is no need to release development lands from those that are governed by the two Conservation Authorities that manage flood lands and natural heritage lands. According to population projections developed by the province, we have sufficient lands for expected development here for the next twenty years.

And we have a very special responsibility here in Lanark County. We are home to one of the last large collections of wetlands in Southern Ontario. This is not inconsequential! Opening these wetlands to development would drastically increase the release of stored carbon to the atmosphere, accelerating deadly climate change. Wetlands store 1,200 tonnes per hectare of carbon (Department of Earth Sciences, University of Toronto, 2018)! They sequester 2-5 times the carbon that forests store. Developing wetlands would make it much harder for municipalities, the province, and Canada to achieve our greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets and would force other sectors to have to take on the burden and the cost of making more extensive cuts in their GHGs.

Lanark County’s wetlands protect against climate destruction and save money for taxpayers and municipalities. Here in Lanark County they are worth \$15,171/hectare/year. (2008 CAD\$; from *Estimating Ecosystem Services in Southern Ontario*, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources 2009).

This Bill is a really bad deal. We don’t get the housing we need; we get huge problems going forward, and it will cost us more.

Do you want to stop this? Call and leave a message with the very friendly staff at the Premier’s office at 416-325-1941 or watch for one of the many protests.

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## An Exceptional Library Fundraiser

An exhibition entitled *EXCEPTIONAL* is scheduled to run at the Mississippi Mills Public Library — Almonte Branch from December 3–30. Featuring the works of over a dozen exceptionally talented local artists, this is an opportunity to pick up one-of-a-kind gifts for the holiday season as well as support the library. The pieces are unique, affordable and have been donated by the artists. All money from the sales will go directly to support the many programs and events that the Almonte Library provides to the community. For more information about the Library, visit <missmillslibrary.com>.



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# Rural Women Face Higher Risk of Abuse, so What Now Lanark County?

By Fern Martin

More than 40 years ago, three shelters for women and children fleeing abuse opened in Lanark and Renfrew Counties: Lanark County Interval House in Carleton Place, The Bernadette McCann House in Pembroke, and Avoca House in Eganville, which closed in 1996 after Ontario's Ministry of Community & Social Services removed funding. These shelters have saved many lives, but the issue of male violence against women has not abated. In fact, the reverse is happening.

The Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians (CAEP) recently published an article that stated, "The rate of women murdered by a current or ex-partner in Canada has increased from one in every 6 days to one in every 36 hours in 2022." I looked at the statistics gathered by the Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability (CFOJA) and it confirms the CAEP information. Between January 1 and October 31 of this year, 144 women and girls have been killed. On average that is indeed 1 every second day. In the 127 cases where the accused are known, 93% are men.

Examining the breakdowns of compiled domestic violence incidents reveals some marked disparities. Indigenous women and women of colour are disproportionately represented in the numbers. Likewise, the rates of abuse of women living in many rural areas, such as Lanark and Renfrew Counties, are higher. Here in Lanark County, the OPP reported that in the past year there were 553 Domestic Occurrences, 7 cases of suspected Human Trafficking, and 97 Sexual Offences. In the same period, Lanark County Interval

House provided an extensive array of services to 527 women and children (80 of whom sought refuge at the shelter), and received 4,815 crisis calls.

Rural women wanting to escape violent relationships can face a difficult set of obstacles. In rural communities everybody knows everybody. An abused woman could be concerned about the reaction of her partner's parents or other relatives who could very well live next door. She could be worried that others would not believe that Joe, a favourite on the local hockey team, could be abusive. The police officer who plays hockey on the same team may be reluctant to get involved or to believe the woman's story. Or neighbours of Joe, knowing he is abusive, might be afraid to support his partner for fear of reprisal.

The status of the abuser in a rural community is significant. Joe may be an employer, and the employees who are dependent on him for their livelihoods may feel they can't support his partner. A local landlord who is a friend of Joe's may refuse to rent to the woman if she tries to leave her situation. When I worked at Interval House, learning that some church ministers were abusive was a revelation to me. One immediately cleaned out his wife's bank account the day she left him. The teller didn't question his action — after all, he was the local minister.

Even the practicalities of rural life can work against an abused woman. Telephone or



Pamela Cross, a lawyer who was deeply involved with the Renfrew County Coroner's Inquest that investigated the 2015 murders of three women, will be the keynote speaker on Friday, December 9 in Almonte

Interval House a woman described how, after an argument, her husband would clean his gun. She took that as a threat.

On September 22, 2015, a triple femicide in Renfrew County by a man who had had relationships with the three women was horrifying proof that intimate partner violence remains a perilous reality in our region. The resulting June 2022 Coroner's Inquest produced 86 recommendations crafted to bring about the changes needed to reduce and stop male violence. One local response is "What Now Lanark County?", a committee formed to take on the issue in this area.

## Find Out More, Take Action!

You are invited to a "What Now Lanark County?" event being held on Friday, December 9 at 6:30PM at Almonte Old Town Hall. The evening offers a chance to learn from the committee members and special guests who participated in the Inquest, and to contribute to a discussion of what Lanark County can do to ensure the safety and survival of its women and children through an examination of ways to decrease male violence.

Tickets are \$10 or by donation. All proceeds will go towards future "What Now, Lanark County?" events, including a Women's Conference in the spring of 2023. Please visit Tickets Please (TicketsPlease.ca or 485-6434). Free tickets are available by emailing <whatnowlanarkcounty@gmail.com>.

internet service may be lacking or unreliable. Winter plays a special role in the isolation in rural areas. Some women have no personal transportation regardless of the season. There is a higher ratio of guns in rural homes. At

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8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show installation views at Sivarulrasa Gallery

# 8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show Continues in Almonte

Sivarulrasa Gallery's 8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show continues in Almonte until December 30. It's the Gallery's largest show of the year, featuring sculpture, paintings, drawings, photography and mixed media works in many sizes and price points, by local artists as well as those from Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and British Columbia.

Among the 28 Canadian creators featured in the show are five based in Almonte. "We are fortunate to have many world-class artists right here in town," says Gallery Director Sanjeev Sivarulrasa. Almonte-based sculptor Deborah Arnold's latest stone sculpture *Balance* is carved from alabaster and perched elegantly on a steel base. Dale Dunning's imposing

sculpture *Noli Me Tangere II*, made of steel barbed wire and measuring 6 feet by 5 feet, is mounted on the Gallery's deep blue wall. Three large abstract canvases by Almonte-based painter Mary Pfaff, all inspired by stones, are also featured. Several drawings and figurative sculptures by Sue Adams, as well as the latest skull-based work *Ancestor* by Marina Raike, are also showcased prominently in the exhibition.

For video clips from the show and an online catalogue of works, visit <virtualgallery.sivarulrasa.com>. The exhibition can be seen in-person at 34 Mill Street in Almonte from 11AM to 5PM Wednesday through Sunday.

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- Hand-dyed, one-of-a-kind yarns, Ballintotas Alpacas.....\$30
- Metal jingle bells & garlands, Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm.....\$25-60
- Private sound bath journey, 1.5 hour session, dOMe Retreat.....\$65 & up
- Vintage earrings, Electric Catwalk.....\$8
- Sumptuous multi-coloured Batik silk scarf, Fine Batiks.....\$55
- Local food + beer pillow ornaments, Good Food Co.....\$20
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# School of Hard Knocks

## Latest Project by Andy Simpson and Gerry Madden

Carleton Place's Andy Simpson has been making music for at least as long as theHumm has been publishing. Over the years we have covered Andy's ambitious undertakings and enjoyed seeing him perform on local community theatre stages. During the pandemic, Andy kept busy working on another new project his musical partner Gerry Madden — this one entitled *School of Hard Knocks*. We contacted Andy to find out more about his plans for this fifth album.

by Kris Riendeau

### theHumm: Can you give our readers an overview of this concept album?

Andy Simpson: The story takes place in the fictional town of Madsonville, Ontario and tells the story of the staff, students and administration of the middle school there during the first three months of a new school year. We meet characters such as Simon Young, who is 14 years old and a brand-new student at this school; a beloved teacher called Mr. Greene; and we see the changing of the guard when the current principal is replaced by the incoming principal, Mrs. Valerie DeMort and her assistant, Ms. Belle LaStrange.

We also learn that the school — and the town — is haunted by a Troll. While the children and the staff like Mr. Greene, DeMort and LaStrange do not. Tensions build until the teacher is dismissed on false allegations — a claim that was spearheaded by the Troll, who influenced DeMort and LaStrange's thoughts.



Andy Simpson (right) talks about the latest project he has undertaken with his musical partner Gerry Madden (left)

### What was your inspiration for this project?

This concept was drawn from personal experiences that I had both as a child and while working as an Educational Assistant in schools in my hometown of Carleton Place. I was looking for something to write about for our next project, and there it was, right in front of me. I strung together the story of me working as an E.A. with memories of my childhood, and made it a storyline for the album.

As a child, I was moved from school to school through my elementary years, so I was the "new kid" a few times. I didn't really mind that; but then the bullying started. I was horrendously bullied by other children — on the playground, in gym, the change room, you name it. I was smaller than other kids and had difficulty walking and keeping my balance (later diagnosed as Cerebral Palsy, Stage 1, at 20 years old), so I was an easy target for bullies. Every single line in *Bullying Song* on the album was either said to me or done to me in the changerooms.

I didn't really know it at the time, but I had (and still do have) a few learning disabilities in addition to my physical disabilities. The school system tried to make things easier for me, I grant that. I still feel I fell through the cracks though. All that said, I think I came out on the other side of things alright. I survived. Bullying sucks, but I got through it.

I will point out that this story is a work of fiction, based on true events. There are a couple of songs on the album that are born out of my imagination — and also what I heard from Gerry's riffs when I was writing the lyrics and coming up with the storyline. The fictional elements, I think, make the story a little more interesting and, of course, a little more dramatic.

### Musically and artistically, who were your collaborators and what did they contribute to *School of Hard Knocks*?

Gerry wrote the music and I wrote the lyrics and the story. We recorded the album with Kirk Armstrong, who also played all the guitars and keyboards on it. He also engineered and mixed it.

On the artistic side of the album, all the artwork was done by my friend Jesse Gibson. The photography was done by Michaela Koster.

### The pandemic was tough on performers, but it did offer opportunities for creative pursuits. Did working on an ambitious project like this one help you get through the past few years?

Yes, I think so. We actually wrote and recorded everything before the world shut down for what seemed like an eternity. The finger snaps and the "Sh!" sounds on the "Schoolyard Shuffle" track were the last things

recorded for the album. We were going to mix it the next week (March 13) when everything just... went away and I wasn't able to get back into the studio. The album was supposed to be released in September of 2020 but that never happened.

While this was happening, I wrote the stage version of the album, adding dialogue and scenes here and there in between the musical numbers from the album. My friend Jesse Gibson, who did the cover art and the sound effects as well as co-producing (*I Feel Like Charlie Brown*) on the album, co-wrote the stage script with me. He added some scenes and characters that enhanced the story.

In 2021, Kirk started to send me tracks from the album as he mixed them. I would listen, make notes and send them to him, and we would go back and forth until every track was mixed.

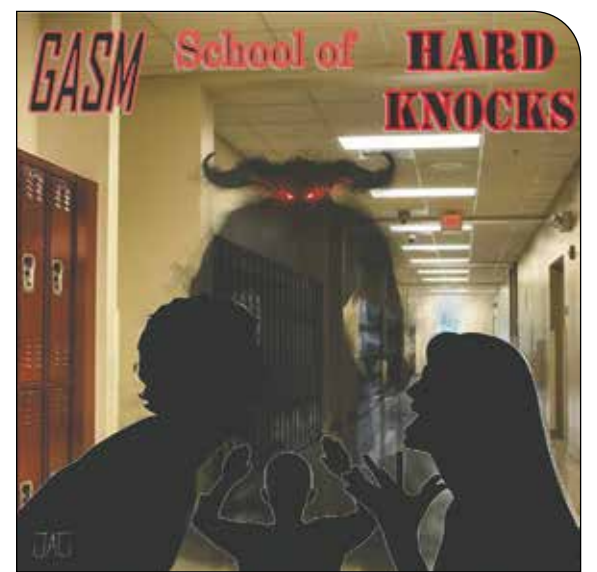
By the start of 2022, I was bound and determined to get the album out. So, to start with, we would release two singles a month from the album in the hopes of gaining interest. This started in January and moved to the end of May — two singles a month. Each single was released on the same day in each month.

Then, finally, in November, we released the full album in physical format and online.

During the lockdown, I got bored and decided to write the novelization of *School of Hard Knocks*. I conceived it as a Young Adult novel. When working on it, I would send the manuscript to friends to get their input. One of the friends was Jesse Gibson, who wound up co-writing the novel with me. He had lots of great ideas and expanded some of my ideas and tied up loose plot threads that I had left. He added a lot to the story and I was very happy with the results. It was intended to be sold as a companion piece to the album. We will get the novel out... eventually.

### What are your hopes and plans for the future of this album, and how can people follow your progress?

What I would love to see is this album be staged as a rock musical. That's the ultimate goal for this



project, as it is for our other concept albums (*The Fork, We Are Right* and *Robinson Crusoe*). I think the first step to getting to that goal is to do a staged reading of the piece for two or three nights at a local theatre somewhere and see how the audience reacts to it. It doesn't have to be that elaborate; just actors on stage reading the script and singing the score.

Gerry and I are also putting together a live band to play the material in pubs, churches, theatres, schools, you name it. Things are just starting out in that venture at this point, so we'll see where it goes. But ideally, I would like the band to play a few shows next year and have the reading and the novel out by December of 2023. Maybe a full stage production of the musical in 2024 or 2025. And who knows? Maybe a movie. That would be fun.

People who have heard our other albums and have heard this from demos to final product have told us this is our best work; our best album. I'm quite proud of this material. I think it's because of the personal feelings that I have about the situation — and the people involved in the situation. But writing these songs was cathartic for me in the sense that I now have had my say about things. Now it's out in the public and I can let the feelings and the situation go at last!

Our website is <gasmusic.com> for more info, contact information and all the other stuff like YouTube, Facebook, etc.

## Gifts for Coffee & Tea Lovers

- Stevens Pottery super cute handmade sweater mugs, Concave Gallery .....\$39.99
- Bisou Bar fair-trade teas, Good Food Co.....\$9-12
- Porcelain mugs by Paperproducts Design, Mariposa Design.....\$21.95
- Local mugs by beautiful potters!, Riverguild Fine Crafts.....\$25 & up



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Secretary of State

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# Back Forty Artisan Cheese Holiday Event

On Saturday, December 10 from 10AM to 4PM, Back Forty Artisan Cheese will be hosting their annual Holiday Open House at their farm and dairy in the hamlet of Mississippi Station. This festive event will provide customers with a great opportunity to stock up on some delicious cheese for the holiday season — the Back Forty gift basket is sure to please the cheese lover on your list! To make this a customer appreciation day, they are offering 15% off select cheeses as well as free sampling. Additionally, the shop will also feature a unique selection of locally crafted foods, one-of-a-kind gift items, and cuts of Back Forty's own grass-fed lamb and whey-fed heritage pork.

Be sure to visit the Jenna Rose Textile Studio, which is situated above the cheese factory and tasting room. Jenna Fenwick, an accomplished artist and screen printer, has just launched her 2022 fall/winter collection which includes some beautiful yet functional pieces of original work ranging from handbags to pillows. All of her lovely products are handmade



Make Mississippi Station your destination on December 10!



featuring her own screen printed illustrations. For a preview of her work, visit <a href="http://jennarose.ca">jennarose.ca</a>.

If you've never visited the farm and dairy in the winter, you're in for a treat. The outdoor licensed bistro features a wood-fired oven and grill, and this year they will be serving a selection of hot and cold beverages alongside their signature Macaroni and Back Forty Cheese. The large outdoor fire pit will be roaring, and if weather permits, the farm will open their toboggan runs and snowshoe trails that meander along the Mississippi River, fields and forest with snowshoe rentals available. Follow them on Instagram for up-to-the-minute details @back40artisancheese or visit <a href="http://artisancheese.ca">artisancheese.ca</a>.

## Gifts for \$25 & Under

- Assorted raw sheep's milk cheese wedges, Back 40 Artisan Cheese.....\$7-17
- Our 3-for-\$20 vintage accessories, Electric Catwalk.....\$20
- Women's bunny slippers with ultra-plush non-slip soles, Foodsmiths.....\$19.99
- Canadian cheeses, cheese club & cheese gift bags, Pêches & Poivre.....\$10 & up
- Cherry almond ginger bark, Hummingbird Chocolate.....\$9.99
- Foaming hand soaps by Michel Design Works, Mariposa Design.....\$16.95
- Lazy Kitty charcuterie for cats, Natural Pet Foods.....\$15.99
- TheraBand foot roller, Thrive Chiropractic.....\$20



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**Pakenham Frost Festival**, January  
**AiC: Few & Fewer**, Almonte, Jan 14  
**Travelogue: Costa Rica**, Almonte, Jan 18  
**BOTR: Jack de Keyzer**, Westport, Jan 20, 21  
**Anne of Green Gables**, Perth, Jan 26-29  
**Folkus: Jim Bryson**, Almonte, Jan 28  
**Jeff Martin**, Burnstown, Jan 28  
**Travelogue: Hawaii**, Almonte, Feb 15  
**BOTR: Spiegel & Vinnick**, Westport, Feb 17  
**Folkus: Suzie Vinnick**, Almonte, Feb 18  
**Ariel Posen**, Burnstown, Feb 24  
**AiC: Nature's Folk Songs**, Almonte, Mar 11  
**Travelogue: Cycling in England**, Almonte, Mar 15  
**BOTR: David Gogo**, Westport, Mar 24  
**Folkus: The Gravel Project**, Almonte, Mar 25  
**BOTR: Harrison Kennedy**, Westport, Apr 14  
**AiC: Nannerl**, Almonte, Apr 15  
**Travelogue: Daily life in Iran**, Almonte, Apr 19  
**The Sound of Music**, Carleton Place, Apr 28-May 7  
**Folkus: A Leverage for Mountains**, Almonte, Apr 29  
**BOTR: Goudreau & Boppin' Blues Band**, Westport, May 5  
**BOTR: Blackburn Brothers**, Westport, Jun 2  
**Mississippi Mills 200 Celebrations**, 2023

## Festivals

**Light Up The Night**, Dec 2, 6PM treats, street food; 7PM concert; 8:30 fireworks. Wayne Rostad is back! Downtown Almonte. Free. [lightupthenightalmonte.com](http://lightupthenightalmonte.com)  
**Pakenham Santa Claus Parade**, Dec 3, 1PM. Stewart Community Ctr to Cty Rd 29 (twice!). Stay for hotdogs/hot choc & free skate. Free. [mississippimills.ca](http://mississippimills.ca)  
**Almonte Christmas Night Parade**, Dec 4, 5PM. Community Ctr-Mill St-Main-Martin-Bridge (w/collection of food donations). Stay for hotdogs/hot choc & free skate. Free. [mississippimills.ca](http://mississippimills.ca)  
**Perth Santa Claus Parade**, Dec 3, 5PM. Sunset Blvd-Wilson St-Foster St-Gore St-Cockburn-school. Downtown Perth. 264-0123  
**Kintail Country Christmas**, Dec 10, 11AM-3PM. Crafts, refreshments, stories by the fire, etc. Mill of Kintail Conservation Area, Almonte. \$15/vehicle. [millofkintail.com](http://millofkintail.com)  
**Moonlight & Mistletoe Market**, Dec 15, 4-8PM. Carols, Santa, gift wrapping & late shopping. Downtown Arnprior. [gacc.ca](http://gacc.ca)  
**Local Food**  
**Chocolate Party**, Dec 2-3, 10AM-4PM. Local, fair trade, & sustainably-sourced chocolate. Free hot chocolate bar. The Granary, Carleton Place. [info@granary.ca](mailto:info@granary.ca)  
**Back Forty Holiday Open House**, Dec 10, 10AM-4PM. Enjoy food & drinks fireside; shop cheeses, preserves, gift baskets. Back Forty Artisan Cheese, Mississippi Station. [artisancheese.ca](http://artisancheese.ca)

# WHAT'S ON IN

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<p><b>Concave Gallery</b> presents their "\$100 &amp; Under Show" featuring dozens of artists, crafters and makers &lt;<a href="http://concavegallery.com">concavegallery.com</a>&gt;  <b>Mississippi Valley Textile Museum</b> presents <i>Fate, Destiny &amp; Self-determination</i>, coordinated by Line Dufour; <i>People and Place</i> &lt;<a href="http://mvtm.ca">mvtm.ca</a>&gt; [to Dec 18]  <b>N. Lanark Regional Museum</b> presents <i>Scenes of Christmas Past</i> &lt;<a href="mailto:nlrnmuseum@gmail.com">nlrmuseum@gmail.com</a>&gt;  <b>Perth Museum</b> presents Georgian &amp; Victorian traditions in <i>Home for the Holidays</i> [Dec 1-24, Wed-Sun]  <b>Perth Library</b> presents works by Colleen Gray &lt;<a href="http://perthunionlibrary.ca">perthunionlibrary.ca</a>&gt;  <b>Sivarulrasa Gallery</b> presents 28 Canadian artists in 8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show &lt;<a href="http://sivarulrasa.com">sivarulrasa.com</a>&gt; [to Dec 30]  <b>Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum</b> presents the Smiths Falls Art Show w/33 artists &lt;283-6311&gt; [to Dec 17]  <b>The Almonte Library Corridor Gallery</b> presents <i>Exceptional</i>, local artists' work as library fundraiser [Dec 3-30]</p>	<p><b>Hackberry Men's Shed Breakfast</b>, Carleton Place  <b>SF Bridge Club</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Music Trivia</b>, The Barley Mow  <b>Soup 'n Dipity</b>, Carp  <b>Jon McLurg</b>, The Cove</p>	<p><b>Women &amp; Men of the Tay Christmas Concert</b>, Perth  <b>Almonte Bridge Club</b>, Almonte  <b>Trivia Night</b>, Bowie's  <b>Wings 'n Tunes &amp; Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough</b>, The Cove  <b>Meditation &amp; Associated Processes</b>, Perth  <b>Travelogue: Mighty St Lawrence</b>, Almonte  <b>CP&amp;D Hort: AGM &amp; Christmas Flower Demo</b>, Carleton Place</p>	<p><b>Scrooge! - The Musical</b>, Perth  <b>Festive Holiday Tea</b>, Appleton  <b>Equator's Christmas Open House</b>  <b>Krief</b>, The Cove  <b>Open Stage</b>, Bowie's  <b>Musicians Circle</b>, Bolingbroke  <b>Almonte Song Circle Collective</b>  <b>Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast/Social</b>, Carleton Place</p>
<p><b>Carp Celtic Jam</b>, Carp Masonic Lodge  <b>Meghan Balogh &amp; Martin Smit</b>, The Cove</p>	<p><b>SF Bridge Club</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Music Trivia</b>, The Barley Mow  <b>Piano Bar w/Benni Vander</b>, The Cove  <b>Lanark Co. Camera Club Meeting</b>, Perth</p>	<p><b>Almonte Bridge Club</b>, Almonte  <b>Trivia Night</b>, Bowie's  <b>Wings 'n Tunes &amp; Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough</b>, The Cove  <b>Nine Lessons &amp; Carols</b>, Clayton</p>	<p><b>Lynn Miles w/Crusty Mitten Strings</b>, Perth  <b>Moonlight &amp; Mistletoe Market</b>, Arnprior  <b>Open Stage</b>, Bowie's  <b>Musicians Circle</b>, Bolingbroke  <b>Almonte Song Circle Collective</b>  <b>Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast/Social</b>, Carleton Place  <b>Eric Uren &amp; Meghan Balogh</b>, The Cove  <b>Kyle Felhaver</b>, Arnprior</p>
<p><b>Carp Celtic Jam</b>, Carp Masonic Lodge  <b>Nolan Hubbard</b>, The Cove</p>	<p><b>Hackberry Men's Shed Breakfast</b>, Carleton Place  <b>SF Bridge Club</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Music Trivia</b>, The Barley Mow  <b>Soup 'n Dipity</b>, Carp  <b>Jon Jones</b>, The Cove</p>	<p><b>Almonte Bridge Club</b>, Almonte  <b>Trivia Night</b>, Bowie's  <b>Wings 'n Tunes &amp; Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough</b>, The Cove</p>	<p><b>Almonte Song Circle Collective</b>  <b>Naismith Men's Shed Breakfast/Social</b>, Carleton Place  <b>Toastmasters Online</b>  <b>Meghan Balogh &amp; Martin Smit</b>, The Cove  <b>Holiday Trivia Night</b>, Arnprior  <b>Open Stage</b>, Bowie's  <b>Musicians Circle</b>, Bolingbroke</p>
<p><b>Carp Celtic Jam</b>, Carp Masonic Lodge</p>	<p><b>SF Bridge Club</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Music Trivia</b>, The Barley Mow  <b>Matt Dickson</b>, The Cove</p>	<p><b>Almonte Bridge Club</b>, Almonte  <b>Trivia Night</b>, Bowie's  <b>Wings 'n Tunes &amp; Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough</b>, The Cove</p>	<p><b>Cameron Wyatt</b>, The Cove  <b>Open Stage</b>, Bowie's  <b>Sierra Levesque</b>, Arnprior</p>

**Almonte Holiday Farmers' Market**, Dec 10, 9AM-1PM. Local food & gifts. Almonte Community Centre/Arena. [almontefarmersmarket.com](http://almontefarmersmarket.com)  
**Visual Arts**  
**Artistic Creations (\$200 & under) Sale**, Dec 2 (3-8PM), 3 (9AM-4PM), 4 (11:30AM-4PM). St. Paul's United Church, Carp. [westcarletonartsociety.ca](http://westcarletonartsociety.ca)  
**Xmas Craft & Art Show**, Dec 2-4 and 9-11: Fri (5-9PM), Sat-Sun (11AM-5PM). Local art, food & drink! S.M. art Gallery, Carleton Place. [sarahmoffat.com](http://sarahmoffat.com)  
**Exhibit & Library Fundraiser begins: Exceptional**, Dec 3. Runs Dec 3-30. Local artists work for sale; profits to Library. Mississippi Mills Public Library - Almonte Branch. [ikadoke@me.com](mailto:ikadoke@me.com)  
**Open Studio: Hankin/Maracle**, Saturdays until Dec 31, 10AM-4PM. Tour Linda Hankin & Doug Maracle's art studio & art gallery. Rideau Lakes. 273-6513  
**Holiday Pop-up Sale**, Dec 3, 11AM-4PM. 3 Brooke Valley studios with guest artists. [facebook.com/SusieOslerCeramics](http://facebook.com/SusieOslerCeramics)  
**Lanark Co. Camera Club Meeting**, Dec 13, 7-9PM. Speaker Ginny Fobert: Ginny's Artistic Journey. BIRL Bldg. Algonquin College, Perth. 1st mtg free. [lcccameraclub.com](http://lcccameraclub.com)

## Theatre

**Scrooge! - The Musical**, Dec 1-3, 7:30PM; Dec 3-4, 2PM. Studio Theatre Perth. Tix: \$27. [TicketsPlease.ca](http://TicketsPlease.ca). Studio Theatre Perth  
**The Best Christmas Pageant Ever**, Dec 2, 8-9, 7:30PM; Dec 2-4, 11-12, 2PM. Holiday fun for the whole family! Tix: \$20/\$10. [smithsfallstheatre.com](http://smithsfallstheatre.com), 283-0300. The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls  
**Film Club Fridays w/TIFF**, Dec 9, 2- & 7PM Dec 9, 2PM+7PM. See [studiotheatreperth.com](http://studiotheatreperth.com) for movie info. Studio Theatre Perth. 12. [ticketsplease.ca](http://ticketsplease.ca)  
**Auditions: Mudds' Sound of Music**, Dec 10, 9AM. [mississippimudds.ca](http://mississippimudds.ca). Carleton Place  
**Youth**  
**See Santa!**, Dec 3-4, 10-11, 12-2PM. Also Xmas trees & more. Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm, Pakenham. [cedarhillchristmas-treefarm.com](http://cedarhillchristmas-treefarm.com)  
**Meet Santa & Mrs. Claus**, 11AM-1PM. Dec 3 & 10. Bring your family & friends down to the Code's Mill Building in the Atrium to see Santa & Mrs. Claus. Bring your cameras to have your pictures taken with Santa. Code's Mill, Perth. [blackflygrubhub.com](http://blackflygrubhub.com)

**Christmas at the Palace**, Dec 10, 10AM-3PM. Children's crafts among the trees, school choir concerts, community sing-along (2PM). Donations to YAK accepted. Crystal Palace, Perth. Free; donations appreciated  
**Family-friendly Drag & Countdown**, Dec 31, 2-4PM. Urban Angus Steak & Wine, Arnprior. from \$10. [urbanangussteakandwine.com](http://urbanangussteakandwine.com)

## Music

**Musicians Circle**, Thu, 7PM. All musicians, all genres; no audience. Althorpe Bolingbroke Community (ABC) Hall. [abchall.ca](http://abchall.ca)  
**Almonte Song Circle Collective**, every Thursday, 6PM share new songs; 7PM play covers together. Equator Coffee Roasters, Almonte. [equator.ca/pages/almonte-cafe](http://equator.ca/pages/almonte-cafe)  
**Festival of Small Halls: Wendy MacIsaac & Mac Morin**, Dec 2, 7:30PM. Celtic fiddle music & dance. Althorpe Bolingbroke Community Hall. \$35. [ontariosmallhalls.com](http://ontariosmallhalls.com)  
**Almonte in Concert: Christmas w/ Quartom**, Dec 3, 7:30PM. Quartet of tenor, 2 baritones, bass-baritone. Tix: [TicketsPlease.ca](http://TicketsPlease.ca), 485-6434. Almonte Old Town Hall. \$44. [almonteinconcert.com](http://almonteinconcert.com)

**Blues on the Rideau: Angeliqe Francis**, Dec 2, 7-11PM. 273-3636 to reserve. The Cove Country Inn, Westport, \$100 dinner+show, [bluesontherideau.ca](http://bluesontherideau.ca)  
**Perth's Citizen Band's Christmas Concert**, Dec 4, 2PM. Perth Legion. \$10; \$20 per family. [perthband.ca](http://perthband.ca)  
**Women & Men of the Tay Christmas Concert**, Dec 7, 7:30PM. Xmas favourites. Tix: [TicketsPlease.ca](http://TicketsPlease.ca), 485-6434. St. James the Apostle Anglican Church, Perth. \$12  
**Roxy Swan & Peter Brown**, Dec 10, 6-10PM. Jazz duo. Options Jazz Lounge at Brookstreet, Kanata. 271-1800  
**Music at MERA: Marleyn & Lacroix**, Dec 11, 2PM. Classical music by Paul Marleyn & Frederic Lacroix. Tix: [TicketsPlease.ca](http://TicketsPlease.ca), 485-6434. MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners. \$25  
**Nine Lessons & Carols**, Dec 14, 7PM. Clayton Community Centre. 256-2644  
**Lynn Miles w/Crusty Mitten Strings**, Dec 15, 7:30PM. Tix: [harmonyconcerts.ca](http://harmonyconcerts.ca). Studio Theatre Perth. \$20-35  
**Musicworks Open Mic**, Dec 16, 6-9PM. Host Trevor Lubin. Everyone welcome! Equator Coffee Roasters, Almonte. [equator.ca](http://equator.ca)  
**Ambre McLean Xmas Concert**, Dec Dec 16-17, 7PM. Tickets at [eventbrite.ca](http://eventbrite.ca). The Station Theatre, Smiths Falls. \$25



# DECEMBER 2022

## Friday

## Saturday

## Sunday

<p><b>Scrooge! - The Musical</b>, Perth  <b>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Chocolate Party</b>, Carleton Place  <b>Artistic Creations (\$200 &amp; under) Sale</b>, Carp  <b>Xmas Craft &amp; Art Show</b>, Carleton Place  <b>Men &amp; Women of the Tay Choir</b>, Perth  <b>Light Up The Night</b>, Almonte  <b>BOTR: Angelique Francis</b>, The Cove  <b>Ryan MacIntyre</b>, Arnprior  <b>Festival of Small Halls: Wendy MacIsaac &amp; Mac Morin</b>, Bolingbroke  <b>Bradley D. Scott</b>, Arnprior  <b>Holiday Shop &amp; Hop</b>, Westport  <b>Brock Zeman</b>, Bowie's  <b>Naismith Men's Shed Zoom</b>, contact for link</p>	<p><b>Santa Claus Parade, Meet Santa</b>, Pakenham, Perth  <b>Scrooge! - The Musical</b>, Perth  <b>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Nick of Time Artisan Show</b>, Perth  <b>Pet Pics with Santa</b>, Arnprior  <b>Chocolate Party</b>, CP <b>Xmas Craft &amp; Art Show</b>, CP  <b>Open Studio</b>, Rideau Lakes <b>Art Sale</b>, Brooke Valley  <b>Artistic Creations Sale</b>, Carp  <b>Christmas Village &amp; Craft Sale</b>, Almonte  <b>Family Christmas Fun</b>, Appleton  <b>Flutterby Open House</b>, Perth  <b>Young Petty Stones Dinner+Show</b>, The Cove  <b>Almonte in Concert: Christmas w/Quartom</b>, Almonte  <b>Christmas Celebration</b>, CP  <b>Country Night: Eastbound of Bytown</b>, Arnprior</p>	<p><b>Scrooge! - The Musical</b>, Perth  <b>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Artistic Creations (\$200 &amp; under) Sale</b>, Carp  <b>Feliz Naughty Dog Bake &amp; Craft Show</b>, Arnprior  <b>Perth's Citizen Band's Christmas Concert</b>, Perth  <b>Grey Jazz Big Band</b>, Buster's  <b>Almonte Christmas Night Parade</b>, Almonte  <b>Xmas Craft &amp; Art Show</b>, Carleton Place  <b>Redneck Limousine</b>, Waterfront Gastropub  <b>Eric Uren</b>, The Cove  <b>See Santa!</b>, Pakenham</p>
<p><b>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Violence against Women: What Now, Lanark County?</b>, Almonte  <b>Film Club Fridays w/TIFF</b>, Perth  <b>Jeff Callery</b>, The Cove  <b>Xmas Craft &amp; Art Show</b>, Carleton Place  <b>Dale Yuke</b>, Arnprior  <b>Sleepy Jean</b>, Bowie's  <b>Naismith Men's Shed Zoom</b>  <b>Scottish Country Dancing</b>, Perth</p>	<p><b>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Meet Santa</b>, Perth, Pakenham  <b>Xmas Craft &amp; Art Show</b>, Carleton Place  <b>Pet Pics with Santa</b>, Arnprior  <b>Open Studio: Hankin/Maracle</b>, Rideau Lakes  <b>Almonte Holiday Farmers' Market</b>, Almonte  <b>Auditions: Mudds' Sound of Music</b>, Carleton Place  <b>Back Forty Holiday Open House</b>, Mississippi Station  <b>Christmas at the Palace</b>, Perth  <b>Kintail Country Christmas</b>, Almonte  <b>Jingle Mingle</b>, Bolingbroke  <b>Deborah Lynn</b>, Westport Brewing Co.  <b>Roxy Swan &amp; Peter Brown</b>, Kanata  <b>East Coast Experience Dinner+Show</b>, The Cove  <b>Café Parodique Drag &amp; Burlesque</b>, Bowie's</p>	<p><b>The Best Christmas Pageant Ever</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Holiday Heritage House</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Music at MERA: Marleyn &amp; Lacroix</b>, McDonalds Corners  <b>See Santa!</b>, Pakenham  <b>Xmas Craft &amp; Art Show</b>, Carleton Place  <b>LMJ - A Christmas Celebration</b>, Neat Coffee Shop  <b>Redneck Limousine</b>, Waterfront Gastropub  <b>Eric Uren</b>, The Cove  <b>APEX Jazz Band</b>, Buster's</p>
<p><b>Musicworks Open Mic</b>, Almonte  <b>Doubleback Dinner+Show</b>, The Cove  <b>Ambre McLean Xmas Concert</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Lanark County Revival</b>, Lanark  <b>Holiday Comedy Night</b>, Arnprior  <b>The Last Supper</b>, Bowie's  <b>Naismith Men's Shed Zoom</b>  <b>Scottish Country Dancing</b>, Perth</p>	<p><b>Anna Ludlow's Xmas Kitchen Party</b>, Perth  <b>Ambre McLean Xmas Concert</b>, Smiths Falls  <b>Jon V W</b>, Westport Brewing Co.  <b>80s Enuff Dinner+Show</b>, The Cove  <b>Jazz w/Peter Woods</b>, Bowie's  <b>Open Studio: Hankin/Maracle</b>, Rideau Lakes</p>	<p><b>Nine Lessons &amp; Carols</b>, Perth  <b>Eric Uren</b>, The Cove  <b>Scott Owen</b>, Westport Brewing Co.  <b>Jim Bryson</b>, Bowie's  <b>Redneck Limousine</b>, Waterfront Gastropub</p>
<p><b>Xmas Eve Jazz Night w/Spencer Evans Trio</b>, The Cove  <b>Naismith Men's Shed Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>Open Studio: Hankin/Maracle</b>, Rideau Lakes</p>	<p><b>Perth Community Christmas Day Dinner</b>, Perth</p>
<p><b>Logan Brown</b>, The Cove  <b>Comedy Night</b>, Neat Coffee Shop  <b>Naismith Men's Shed Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>Young Petty Stones Dinner+Show</b>, The Cove  <b>Drag &amp; Burlesque &amp; DJ Celebration</b>, Arnprior  <b>Open Studio: Hankin/Maracle</b>, Rideau Lakes  <b>Family-friendly Drag &amp; Countdown</b>, Arnprior</p>	<p><b>Polar Bear Plunge</b>, Perth</p>

**Festive Holiday Tea**, Dec 1, 1-2PM, 3-4PM. Treats, Xmas readings. Register for 1 of 2 seatings at 257-8503. Appleton Museum. \$15. 257-8503

**Men & Women of the Tay Choirs at Festival of Lights**, Dec 2, 5:30-8PM. Trad. carols outside, bonfire, refreshments, fireworks (6:15PM). Crystal Palace, Perth

**Holiday Shop & Hop**, Dec 2-3. prizes, pet photos, crafts, music. facebook.com/HolidayShopandHop. Westport shops, The Cove & more

**Nick of Time Artisan Show**, Dec 3, 10AM-3:30PM. Find gifts by local artisans. Crystal Palace, Perth. facebook.com/nickoftimePerth

**Flutterby Open House**, Dec 3. Music by Long Sault Trio, new store opening. Shaw's Bldg, 1 Gore St. E. Perth

**Carleton Place Christmas Celebration**, Dec 3, 10AM-4PM (photos w/ Santa, street entertainment); Dec 8, 7-10PM (music with Joe Mamma). Downtown Carleton Place

**Pet Pics with Santa**, Dec 3 & 10, 10AM-4PM. Arnprior Humane Society fundraiser. RONA, Arnprior. arnpriorhumaneociety.ca

**Christmas Village & Craft Sale**, Dec 3, 9AM-4PM. Handmade gifts, baked goods, ornaments, jewellery, wreaths & more. From 1PM: sleigh rides, visit with Santa, games. Orchard View by the Mississippi, Almonte. 963-5000

**Christmas Artisans' Market**, Dec 3, 10AM-4PM. Carvings, paintings, beadwork, pottery, wreaths, etc. Emmanuel Heritage Centre, Portland. emmanuelheritage2@gmail.com

**Christmas Treats Sale**, Dec 3, 10AM-2PM. Candy, baked goods, froz. turkey dinners. Trinity-St. Andrew's United Church, Renfrew. tsarenfrew.ca

**Family Christmas Fun**, Dec 3, 10AM-3PM. Crafts, cider, cookies, vintage style. Appleton Museum. \$5; \$10 family. 257-8503

**Feliz Naughty Dog Bake & Craft Show**, Dec 4, 10AM-3PM. Arnprior Humane Society fundraiser. Nick Smith Centre, Arnprior. arnpriorhumaneociety.ca

**Soup 'n Dipity**, Dec 6 & 20, 11:30AM-1PM. Soup, sandwiches, cookies, tea/coffee. St. Paul's United Church, Carp. \$10. stpauls-dunrobin.ca

**Meditation & Associated Processes**, Dec 7, 1:30-3PM. 225-4675. Perth & District Union Library. By donation. 225-4675

**Travelogue: Mighty St Lawrence**, Dec 7, 7PM. Including Isle of the Madeleine, w/Sherryl Smith. Almonte Library. Free. missmillslibrary.com

**CP&D Hort: AGM & Christmas Flower Demo**, Dec 7, 7PM. Zion-Memorial United Church, Carleton Place. \$5 or \$15/yr. cphorticulture.ca

**Toastmasters Online**, Dec 8 & 22, 7PM. Dec 8 "A Night at the Improv - Impromptu Speaking"; Dec 22 "Help Improve your Public Speaking and Leadership Skills". carletonplacet toastmasters@gmail.com for Zoom link

**Violence against Women: What Now, Lanark County?**, Dec 9, 6:30PM Opening Ceremony, mosaic behind OTH. 7PM Panel Discussion: What can we do to prevent similar tragedies? Tix: TicketsPlease.ca. Almonte Old Town Hall. \$10. lch.com

**Jingle Mingle**, Dec 10, 1-3PM. French Onion soup, eggnog, homemade baking, & Mike Irvin plays Xmas tunes. Althorpe Bolingbroke Community (ABC) Hall. abchall.ca

**Holiday Heritage House**, Dec 11, 1-3PM. Decorated Victorian home, treats, wagon rides, kids' activities. Heritage House Museum, Smiths Falls. \$10; \$5 (ages 5-12); \$25 (fam of 4). Tix: sfholidayheritagehouse. eventbrite.ca. 283-6311

**Perth Community Christmas Day Dinner**, Dec 25, 12PM. Sit-down meal, takeout, or delivery. Code's Mill, Perth. 326-8365

**Perth Polar Bear Plunge**, Jan 1, 8AM breakfast, 10:30AM plunge. Proceeds to Cornerstone Landing. perthpolarbearplunge.ca

**Lanark County Revival**, Dec 16, 8PM-12AM. Timber Run Golf Club, Lanark. timber-rungolfclub.com

**Anna Ludlow's Xmas Kitchen Party**, Dec 17, 7:30PM. Tix: harmonyconcerts.ca. Studio Theatre Perth. \$15-25

**Nine Lessons & Carols**, Dec 18, 7:30PM. All welcome. St. James the Apostle - Beckwith Entrance, Perth. stjamesperth.ca

## Pub Listings

**Bowie's** (Smiths Falls): Wed Where is my Mind Trivia, 8-10PM (sign-up online); Thu Open Stage, 8PM (casual sign-up); Fri original live music 8:30 & 11:30PM  
 Dec 2 Brock Zeman  
 Dec 3 Karaoke w/Dirt Truck, 9PM  
 Dec 9 Sleepy Jean  
 Dec 10 Café Parodique Drag & Burlesque, 8PM, \$20adv / \$25 door  
 Dec 16 The Last Supper  
 Dec 17 Jazz w/Peter Woods, 8PM  
 Dec 18 Jim Bryson, 7PM, \$20adv  
**Buster's Bar & Grill** (Kanata, 836-7007): 2-5PM, no cover  
 Dec 4 Grey Jazz Big Band, 2-5PM  
 Dec 11 APEX Jazz Band, 2-5PM

**The Cove** (Westport, 273-3636): 5-8PM unless noted; Wed Wings 'n Tunes w/Shawn McCullough, 5:30-8PM; Sun Eric Uren  
 Dec 1 Krief, 6-9PM, \$10 cover  
 Dec 3 Young Petty Stones Dinner+Show, 7-11PM, \$80 dinner/show  
 Dec 5 Meghan Balogh & Martin Smit  
 Dec 6 Jon McLurg  
 Dec 8 Gerald McGrath  
 Dec 9 Jeff Callery, 5-9PM  
 Dec 10 East Coast Experience, 7-11PM, \$80 dinner+show  
 Dec 12 Spencer Scharf  
 Dec 13 Piano Bar w/Benni Vander  
 Dec 15 Eric Uren & Meghan Balogh  
 Dec 16 Doubleback, 7-11PM, \$70 dinner + show  
 Dec 17 80s Enuff, 7-11PM, \$80 dinner + show  
 Dec 19 Nolan Hubbard  
 Dec 20 Jon Jones  
 Dec 22 Meghan Balogh & Martin Smit  
 Dec 23 Xmas Eve Jazz Night w/Spencer Evans Trio, 7-10PM, \$15 cover  
 Dec 27 Matt Dickson  
 Dec 29 Cameron Wyatt  
 Dec 30 Logan Brown  
 Dec 31 Young Petty Stones 7PM-1AM, \$110 dinner/show/12AM toast, party favours

**Carp Masonic Lodge**: Mon Carp Celtic Jam, 7PM, \$3  
**Neat Coffee Shop** (Burnstown, 433-9960): 8PM.  
 Dec 11 LMJ, A Christmas Celebration, \$15  
 Dec 30 Comedy Night, \$25  
**The Barley Mow** (Almonte, 256-5669): Tue Music Trivia, 7:30 PM  
**Urban Angus Steak & Wine** (Arnprior, 558-5050):  
 Dec 2 Ryan MacIntyre, 7PM  
 Dec 3 Eastbound of Bytown, 9PM  
 Dec 9 Dale Yuke, 7PM  
 Dec 15 Kyle Felhaver, 8PM  
 Dec 16 Holiday Comedy Night, 8PM, from \$20  
 Dec 22 Holiday Trivia Night, 7PM  
 Dec 29 Sierra Levesque, 7:30-10:30PM  
 Dec 31 Family-friendly Drag & Countdown, 2-4PM, from \$10 + food bank donation  
 Dec 31 Drag & Burlesque & DJ Celebration, 9:30PM, from \$35  
**The Waterfront Gastropub** (CP, 257-5755) Redneck Limousine, 3-6PM every Sunday  
**Westport Brewing Co.** (Westport, 273-2739):  
 Dec 3 Michael "Spike" Wilcock, 2-4PM  
 Dec 10 Deborah Lynn, 2-4PM  
 Dec 17 Jon V W, 1-3PM  
 Dec 18 Scott Owen, 2-4PM

**Lumbertown Ale House** (Arnprior, 623-8885):  
 Dec 2 Bradley D. Scott, 8-11PM

## Community

**SF Bridge Club**, Tue 12:45PM. Bring proof of vax. Smiths Falls Legion  
**Almonte Bridge Club**, Wed 12:45PM. Bring proof of vax. Almonte Legion  
**Naismith Men's Shed** (naismithmensshed.ca): Thursdays (excl 29), 8:30AM, breakfast (\$12+), Gourmet Restaurant, CP, then social/games (10AM), Almonte Legion; Most Fridays, 10AM, Zoom chat, nicolasdfry@gmail.com for link  
**Hackberry Men's Shed**: Mon-Tue-Thu-Fri mornings, Workshop open, 10AM coffee, opposite 98 Donald St., CP  
 Dec 6, 20 7:30AM, breakfast (\$12+), Gourmet Restaurant, CP.  
**Scottish Country Dancing**, Fri, 9:30AM. Beginner to experienced. 264-2767. At McMartin House; annual membership \$30 + \$2/class.  
**Equator's Christmas Open House**, Dec 1, 6-9PM. Live music, cookie decorating, kids' games, free apps, tours. Equator Coffee Roasters, Almonte. equator.ca



# Orkney – An Interview with Maggie Toner

A good book is a good book, says Maggie Toner — no matter the publisher.

Maggie is the author of *Orkney*, a novel about four souls who develop and eventually come to the full essence of who they are.

by John Pigeau

“That sounds goofy,” she says, “but basically I have told the story of four people and their bonds to one another, using reincarnation as the mechanism of the story and first-party stream of consciousness to narrate it.”

The back flap synopsis reads: “Four brothers in Iron Age Orkney come to a violent end. So violent, in fact, that they are bound together through time, spurring each other on until they learn the meaning of true love for fellow humans. Only then can they be released.”

The 564-page novel might be categorized as literary fantasy. It is divided into five sections, the first set in Orkney during a time of climate change and violence — when the reader is introduced to the four brothers. The following sections unveil a series of characters: a young orphan boy coming of age in Scotland; a young noble girl in Ireland who survives a battle with polio and enters a surprising marriage; a man in his late twenties, born into a wealthy family in Northern Ireland, who joins the British Army, earns a commission, and is eventually posted to the colony of Upper Canada to command a small company of troops protecting the construction of Chaffee’s Lock on the Rideau Canal; and finally a young woman who, despite being from a wealthy family, enters vocational training at the Business School in Fredericton, New Brunswick. This

final section begins in 1914, at the start of the First World War, which is pivotal to the novel’s plot. In each part of the book, the careful reader will note the re-emergence of characters from previous sections.

Are these really separate characters, though? Could they, in fact, be reincarnated souls? By the third section, Maggie says, the discerning reader should find that out.

Maggie, who was a certified management accountant until her retirement in 2014, says she’s been writing in some form her whole life. “Poetry in high school, short stories, even a stab or two at longer works,” she reminisces.

*Orkney*, though, came to her in her dreams, beginning in the winter of 2016. “Eventually I started writing the dreams down,” she explains. “Then new dreams appeared, leading the story along. My motivation, in the beginning, was simply writing down the stories from my dreams. But then the process grabbed me, and the research into the places and people fascinated me, and by the time I was about halfway through, I knew I had a book.”

To get the book published, Maggie chose to self-publish through Amazon, an experience she has found “extremely difficult.”

“I couldn’t get a traditional publisher to even consider reading my manuscript,” Maggie says, “and I just didn’t have the thousands required for a vanity publisher, so based on my research, I chose Amazon.”

She felt backed into a corner. She wanted people to read her story because she sincerely believed it was good, but as a first-time author her options were limited.

“I have said often, and I will continue to say: writing was easy, intoxicating and sometimes suffocating. But compared to promotion and marketing, it was a walk in the park.”

Those are two of the most challenging aspects of self-publishing, she believes. So too is getting booksellers to stock your book on their shelves.

Her message to booksellers is clear-cut and strong: “Stop resenting writers who publish on Amazon... the publisher should be irrelevant. If it’s a good book, it’s a good book.” She adds: “Arrange for public appearances by the author at your store. It’s the best marketing in the world.” Sales will follow, she feels. “Booksellers need to create a club, a community, which includes authors and keeps them connected to readers,” Maggie says. “Amazon can never do that.”

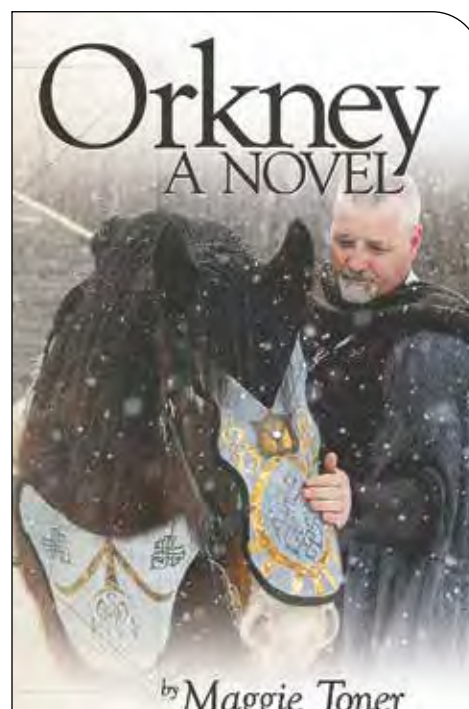
Despite the challenges Maggie’s faced, she says the experience of having her first novel published has been deeply rewarding.

“The first time someone wrote a beautiful review, I actually cried. I phoned my mom and read it to her. I read it out loud to other family members. I revelled in it. The feel of the book in my hands was a thrill too. It’s a big book and could justifiably be broken into two volumes. It is still wicked cool to flip through the pages and see my own words leaping up at me.”

Would she do it again? You bet she would.

“I am already doing research for a potential story about the ‘lost villages’ that were flooded with the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway,” she says. If her research goes well, if it “flows,” the project should take shape; if not, she’ll move on to something else.

That’s what happened when she began dreaming up *Orkney* — literally dreaming it. Things began to flow and “the story took on a life of its own,” Maggie says. Eventually the ideas no longer came to her in dreams but in a more conscious way. “I suppose then, momentum, as well as the promptings of my



subconscious through dreams, were the two biggest motivators.”

To promote the novel, Maggie, who lives just outside of Almonte, created a trailer which you can find on YouTube. The Book Nook and Spark Books and Curious in Perth each have copies of *Orkney* for sale. Mill Street Books in Almonte also has copies, and Maggie says she’s sure if you went to any of these shops and asked for her book, they could be quickly ordered in.

And the review that brought Maggie to happy tears? It came from Goodreads, from someone who loved the book, highly recommended it, and described it as “a beautiful exploration of family, karma, reincarnation, and the connections between souls.”

**On Now**

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# Lanark County Routes Sequel Set for 2023

By Rose Mary Sarsfield

Lanark County Genealogical Society (LCGS) continues to celebrate our farming community and the pioneers who cleared the trees and rocks, built their homes and planted crops around the stumps. Our two-volume set entitled *Lanark County Routes, East and Lanark County Routes West* was a remarkable success when it was published last year.

We tapped into the history recorded in the local *Tweedsmuir History* books and collaborated with several of the present farmers in the County to tell the stories.

We tell about who the early settlers were and what is known of their family, and the subsequent owners up to the present day, noting the changes in farm life from the days of oxen and horses to that of big machinery and robots.

But many stories are yet to be told. We are now beginning to work on a sequel.

LCGS is happy to tell the tales of all the properties and the people who have lived on them, whether they were successful or not. If your farm was not included in last year's books and you are interested in its history being recorded for future generations, please get in touch.

Lanark County farms have a varied history. In the early days of settlement every family relied on the land to provide them with the income and food that they needed to survive. However, that only worked well for those who were fortunate enough to get the good land. Many properties passed through several different hands if they were not profitable. Some properties, with the right people involved, grew and prospered and are still providing adequate living for their owners today.

## Sample Farms in L.C Routes East

The Robertson farm on Upper Perth Road in Ramsay is one whose original settlers' descendants farmed until 1962 when it was sold to another local farmer. Like many of the small older farms, it was no longer able to sustain a family with the income that was needed.

The John Kidd farm on Kidd Road in Beckwith is a farm that is still in the possession of descendants of the original owner, who arrived in Beckwith in 1818.



Lanark County Genealogical Society is planning a sequel to *Lanark County Routes*, and would like to hear from people who wish to have their farms listed in the new edition

This is one of many farms where the descendants' names are recorded for future generations.

Corad Farms in Pakenham Township is an example of several 100-acre parcels being combined into a large modern operation. The Hunt family have over 500 head of Limousin cattle and grow corn, soybeans and hay on their 1000 acres of land.


## Sample Farms in L.C Routes West

The John Love farm in North Sherbrooke is an example of a farm where the pioneer was barely able to make a living because the land was so rocky and poor. This man was eventually forced to move to Dalhousie where he had slightly better land. His buildings from North Sherbrooke did survive and are now part of the display at Wheeler's Pancake House and Museum.

Another difficult area to farm was Darling Township. However, the John Rintoul farm on Concession 6 was able to sustain Rintoul family members for 143 years. When it was sold in 1995 the new owners extensively updated the buildings, including rebuilding the stone foundation under the barn, and made it into a working farm again.

Drover's Way farm in North Elmsley was a property that changed hands many times over the years. The Loten family, who bought the land in 2001, have turned it into a major sheep farm with about 600 ewes. They also have horses and operated a riding school.

For more information, or to enquire about having your farm listed in the sequel, please call 257-9482 or email <communications@lanarkgenealogy.com>.



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# The Art of Festivals



Photo by DeSa Photography

*Light Up  
the Night*  
December 2  
Almonte

Celebrate 30 years of this iconic Christmas kick-off event. Join emcee Wayne Rostad and the crowd of several thousand people sharing the holiday spirit on Mill Street in the heart of Downtown Almonte. Arrive early for vendors featuring delicious holiday treats! Fine family fun in our friendly town.

**SANTA CLAUS  
PARADE**  
December 3  
Pakenham



& **Parade of Lights**  
December 4, Almonte

FREE skating, hot dogs, hot chocolate and visits with Santa. The theme for this year's parades is Christmas Movies.



Kintail  
Country  
Christmas  
December  
Mill of Kintail

Visit the Mill of Kintail Conservation Area for music, crafts, stories, refreshments, Father Christmas and more!  
Call 613-256-3610 x 2 for details. [www.mvc.on.ca](http://www.mvc.on.ca)

Pakenham  
Frost  
Festival  
January  
Pakenham



Winter fun with many events for all to enjoy! Dress warmly and bring the whole family — there's something for all ages.



Photo by Trevor Johnston / eyemove.world.com

**ALMONTE  
IN CONCERT**  
Dec. 3, Jan. 14,  
Mar. 11, Apr. 15  
Almonte  
Old Town Hall

A series of varied chamber music concerts performed by nationally and internationally acclaimed musicians.  
[almonteinconcert.com](http://almonteinconcert.com)

**folkus**   
Jan. 28, Feb. 18,  
Mar. 25, Apr. 29  
Almonte  
Old Town Hall



A roots-based music series held in the colder months offering a rare chance to see Canadian bands up close and hear them as they're meant to be heard!  
[folkusalmonte.com](http://folkusalmonte.com)

[www.mississippimills.ca](http://www.mississippimills.ca)