

JANUARY 2020

the Hummm

free

Arts,
Entertainment
& Ideas



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January's Events

CLASSES

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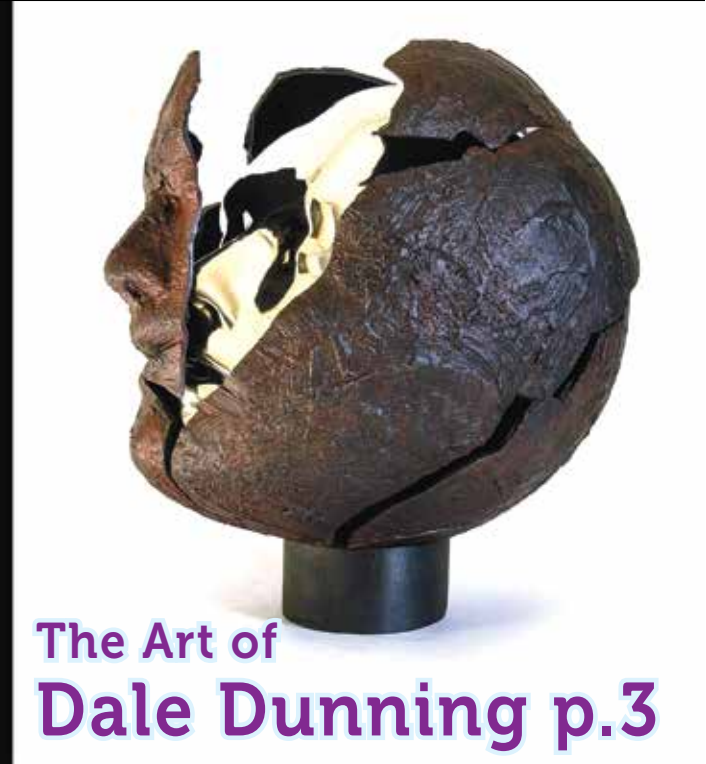
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Dale Dunning p.3



Creative Resolutions for 2020

Celebrate the New Year by enrolling in a class, course or lesson. This issue is full of great local suggestions, and if you end up needing a home studio or conservatory, just give me a call!



Patrick Kelly
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Pat's Picks Glass classes at Current Works of Glass <currentworksofglass.com>
for January: Art classes with Adrian Baker <adrianbakerart.com>
Metal forming workshops with David Ivens <davidivens.ca>
Piano lessons with Peter Brown <peterbrown.ca>

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“But I’m preventing crime! – My wife said she’d kill me if I did this at home!!”



Fiddle In the New Year!

You’re in for a real treat on Sunday, January 5, when the Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra will present their annual **Little Christmas Concert**. Directed by Cindy McCall, this all-ages group comprises 50+ fiddlers with guitar, percussion, penny whistle, viola, bass, cello and flute accompaniment. They will perform some of their recently perfected delightful repertoire. This enthusiastic bunch rehearses on Saturdays and Wednesdays at the Maberly Hall and hails from the rural areas close by. Their fiddle music is sure to get your toes tapping and the fun they are having is contagious.

The Lanark Fiddlers Guild, directed by Cindy McCall, will also perform a selection of Celtic and Christmas tunes. Their arrangements will make the old wooden hall ring with splendour. The Long Sault Trio will perform some seasonal tunes that they have been polishing up for your enjoyment. TXTRS will sing a few of their favourites, and you’ll also hear some delightful tunes from the Slow Bow Trio featuring fiddle, guitar and whistle.

The Little Christmas Concert takes place on January 5 from 2–5PM at the Maberly Hall. Admission is \$10 at the door, and children under 12 get in for free. Refreshments will be available.



Back in 2017, **Sandra Schappert** from Carleton Place wrote: “Attached is a picture of part of my recent journey to the UK. In May 2017, I traveled through the Lake District of England and on to Wales and Ireland. This picture shows me along the River Kent in Kendal, England. TheHumm is our best resource for local events and I’m happy to be able to participate in your travelling segment.”

Thanks to Sandra, and to everyone else who sends in “Who’s Reading theHumm” photos!

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Music for a Sunday Afternoon

St Johns Church (325 Sandhill Rd., Kanata) will be hosting ‘She’s still here: Music by Women.’ Join us January 19th at 3PM. Admission by donation.



Turn that old necklace into a candlelit dinner for two, or enjoy a ski weekend with that gold coin you never look at.

Beware of Travelling Roadshows and “Metal Recyclers”!

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PO Box 1391
Almonte ON K0A 1A0
Phone: (613) 256-5081

Editor:

Kris Riendeau
editor@thehummm.com

Layout and Design:

Rob Riendeau
rob@thehummm.com

Advertising/Promotions:

Kris Riendeau: (613) 256-5081
kris@thehummm.com

Calendar Submissions:

Rona Fraser
calendar@thehummm.com

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, Calabogie, White Lake 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 2019 Lanark County Award of Excellence winners: **Shelley** and **Brent McLaren** of Perth for their work with Men and Women of the Tay Choruses, and **Cindy McCall** of Lanark Highlands for her work with Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra. Congratulations, and thanks for all you do!

Dale Dunning — Still Ahead of His Time

Almost twenty years ago for our May 2000 issue of theHumm I asked Dale Dunning why he was a sculptor. His answer (see the back of his Trading Card) remains the same today. There is no question that he has achieved his goal of leaving a lasting visual legacy; the good news for art lovers is that Dunning persists in adding to his legacy of sculptures that are “objects of reflection and contemplation”.

by Sally Hansen

Most of his works across the intervening twenty years feature a sculpted metal head — “generic, non-specific, genderless, egg-like in form and intention.” Our interview reminds me that Dunning himself personifies the enigmatic nature of his sculptures. The man is friendly, approachable, learned, generous, quietly humorous — but when he talks about his art, his life, his passion — I realize that his art is self-reflective. He presents himself with the same inexplicable quality that makes his sculptures so intriguing.

Dunning knows well that artists have very little control over the responses their works elicit. Viewers carry different pasts and experiences that shape their perceptions and cause them to project intentions, emotions and meanings onto his blank faces that he could never have anticipated. He is fascinated by studies that prove how malleable memory is. This is how he describes his works in his Artist’s Statement: “I look on them as a mirror that reflects back the observer’s experience in new combinations and associations. The works are open-ended with no didactic intent other than to see new possibilities.”

Facing Off

That is exactly how he approaches each new piece, and the enjoyment of that exploratory adventure is what motivates and inspires him. His inspiration has taken many forms. New sculptures emerge from happenstance. His brother brought him 80,000 one-inch screws deemed surplus to requirements in Renfrew. The windfall of non-corroding material spawned a stunning collection of heads with fascinating “skins” of intricately patterned metal-work. He welds bronze rods together, and stainless-steel bolts — he unearthed 300 pounds of them at Ed’s Salvage on Dwyer Hill Road. He has used old metal type welded together and cast in bronze in a beautiful piece entitled Calligraphy, reflecting how inextricably involved humankind is with language and symbols.

Dunning loves the process of creating and he loves a challenge. The possibilities are endless; one

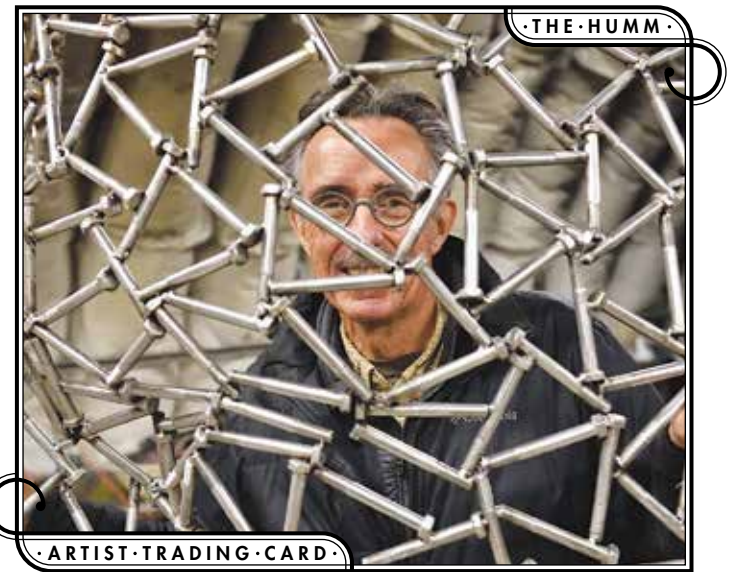
experiment leads to the next. He revels in the knowledge that he doesn’t know exactly what a sculpture will look like until he finishes it. Years ago, when he needed industrial strength aircraft cable to lift a heavy steel table, he asked Almonte’s Ron Caron for help. Today Dale is still lacerating his fingertips by incorporating chunks of the 500-foot steel cable he received into current works. Painstakingly unraveled, the cable frames a face in an original and striking fashion.

When I insist, as always, that the photo on his Artist Trading Card be taken by theHumm, Dale offers to let me preview the stunning, nine-foot, unnamed head sculpture he is working on in his foundry. Scheduled for exhibit this spring in the Sculpture Garden at Oeno Gallery located on Huff Estates Winery in Prince Edward County, this piece



is destined for fame as a showpiece in some appropriate venue. Oeno Gallery sells all over the world, and I can’t wait to hear which fabulously wealthy client or, better yet, world-famous site acquires it. In a perfect world a recording device would capture by-passers’ reactions and the data would reveal fascinating insights into the human psyche. Talk about a Tabula Rasa!

Okay. Tabula Rasa is the name of one of my favourite Dunning pieces. I won’t bore you with my



interpretation of what it “means,” but the smooth, gold-patinated head bursting through the textured bronze shell surrounding it triggers a myriad of responses. In a video on his Oeno Gallery website, Dunning says, “The thing I like about the head is it sort of encompasses what we are. We live in our heads... I use the head as a container to suggest what’s percolating underneath.”

Proud to be a Millian

Born in Ottawa, Dunning earned his MFA Degree from Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan. While earning his BFA from Mt. Alison University, he studied under Lawren P. Harris (son of Group of Seven member Lawren S. Harris) who encouraged him to pursue his career as an artist. After a teaching stint in Toronto that consumed too much of his time, 47 years ago Dale and his wife Elizabeth bought their current home and farmland located ten minutes from Almonte. Dale likes the idea of self-imposed limits and believes that their decision to forego a hectic urban life and its distractions is consonant with his continued concentration on the human head as the vehicle for his sculpture. Focus is not a limitation when you possess an excess of creativity.

Rural roots certainly haven’t constrained his continued growth as a notable Canadian sculptor. In 2012 his work was chosen to illustrate an entire volume of *Dacritics*, a journal of linguistic criticism published by Johns Hopkins University Press. He has exhibited across Canada and his work is held in private, corporate and public collections including the Musée des Beaux Arts in Montreal, Robert McLaughlin Gallery, McIntosh Gallery at Western University, Carleton University Art Collection, the Canada Council Art Bank and the National Library of Canada. He has exhibited in many solo and group shows including in Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, Calgary and New York, and is the recipient of awards from the Canada Council and the Town of Mississippi Mills.

Dunning is represented in many fine galleries and is a fixture at Almonte’s lovely Sivarulrasa Gallery. “Dale Dunning is an exceptionally versatile artist,” notes curator Sanjeev Sivarulrasa. “He has mastered techniques in bronze, aluminum, steel and glass over four decades of relentless creativity.” That’s not all. Dunning is a great photographer too, and consistent in his artistic vision. In our September 2015 issue, I wrote this about Dale’s participation in the 5iz Photographic Collective: “Characteristically, possible interpretations of his new art images are abundant, and indeterminate.” If you don’t like being told what to think, Dale Dunning’s art is for you. It is also incredibly beautiful and magnificently wrought. The back of his Trading Card provides many links to additional information and images.



Happy New Year!

Gallery regular hours resume Jan 10, 2020
(We’ll be closed Jan 1-9)

Tuesdays-Saturdays 11am-6pm
Sundays 11am-4pm

We have 8 exciting exhibitions lined up for you in 2020, along with many cultural events - stay tuned!



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

WHO Dale Dunning

WHAT Sculptor

WHERE By appointment at his Ramsay studio, foundry and gardens, 10K west of Almonte, 277-1597, <daledunning.net>, <ddunning@storm.ca>; Sivarulrasa Gallery, 34 Mill St., Almonte, <sivarulrasa.com>; Oeno Gallery, 2274 Prince Edward County Rd 1, Bloomfield, ON, <oenogallery.com>; Wallack Galleries, 225 Bank St., Ottawa, <wallackgalleries.com>

WHY "My art gives my life meaning — it's important to me to leave a lasting visual legacy."

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Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra presents
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At the Maberly Hall

with special guests:
The Lanark Fiddlers Guild

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Station Theatre: 2020

Celebrating 10 Years of Entertainment

We can't believe that we're here. It's ten years since the Station Theatre finally opened its doors after ten years of preparation. In this past decade, we've been learning, growing and making every attempt to supply great entertainment for our audience, which has also grown over these years. 2020 will be a year-long celebration for us, with Gala Nights every second Friday of each play, where we will have a liquor license and serve appetizers. We will also encourage the audience to make the most of it and dress up a bit. All that we do, we do for the audience, and we want you to feel like you are a part of our celebration too! We've carefully picked six plays for this upcoming year that we think will just blow you away. Comedies, musicals, family shows, and a return of the first mystery we mounted ten years ago. We are looking forward to entertaining you and sharing this beautiful building with you.

We start our season in February with a British farce by John Chapman and Dave Freeman. *Key for Two* (February 14-23) is directed by Linda Pipher. Harriet, a divorcee living in an elegant flat in Brighton, solves her financial problems by entertaining two married gentlemen callers on different days of the week. The scheme faces collapse when her friend Anne, whose marriage is tottering, arrives at the flat hotly pursued by her husband. One of Harriet's lovers is confined to her bed with a sprained ankle and the second lover turns up unexpectedly, closely followed by two irate wives in search of their itinerant husbands. The indescribable confusion that ensues builds to a rich complexity of mistaken identity, splendidly farcical situations and a climax of comic wizardry. Farces are a specific type of play where the action is ridiculous, but none of the characters involved realize it. If you need a laugh to get you through the worst part of winter, this is the show to do it for you!

In April Lynda Daniluk will direct the long-running Broadway musical *The Fantasticks* (April 24 to May 3), with story and lyrics by Tom Jones and music by Harvey Schmidt. "Try to Remember" a time when this romantic charmer wasn't enchanting audiences around the world. It is a timeless fable of love that manages to be nostalgic and universal at the same time. *The Fantasticks* is a funny and romantic musical about a boy, a girl, and their two fathers who try to keep them apart. The narrator, El Gallo, asks the audience to use their imagination and follow him into a world of moonlight and magic. The boy and the girl fall in love, grow apart, and finally find their way back to each other after realizing the truth in El Gallo's words that, "without a hurt, the heart is hollow."

June brings big laughs with Joseph Stein's semi-autobiographical comedy *Enter Laughing* (June 12-21), directed by Sheila Jasiak. This is the riotous account of stage-struck young David Kolowitz, originated on Broadway by Alan Arkin, working as a delivery boy in a sewing machine factory. Denying his parent's wishes for a druggist in the family, he leaves their dreams and his devoted girlfriend Wanda behind and is soon enlisted (and paying for) a slot as the "leading man" in a third-rate theatrical company while being vamped by the resident less-than-leading lady, the daughter of the hammy "artistic director." His baptism of fire is a hilarious first performance in which everything that can go wrong does.

In August, we share the stage with talented youth from the area for the family-friendly *Alice In Wonderland* (August 21-30). This one has book and lyrics by Sally Netzel and music by Beatrice Wolf, and will be directed by Lynda Daniluk. This show brings Wonderland to life through a two-act musical that deals honestly with Lewis Carroll's stories and characters — even Alice's fall down the rabbit hole. It's an adaptation that pays wonderful attention to all the levels of Carroll's story and will entertain not only children but



The photo above shows a scene from the 2019 production of *Out of Order*. The Station Theatre is gearing up for a very full season in 2020!

adults also. John Neville, drama editor of the *Dallas Morning News*, reported: "thanks to Sally Netzel and Beatrice Wolf, here is theatre that kids can grab — it's tuneful, colourful and peopled with characters they can understand". Bring the whole family for this one.

The end of September brings our yearly mystery directed by Katharine Coleman. *The Ghost Train* (September 25 to October 4) by Andrew Ridley is special to us, as it was first produced here in October 2010. This will be a collaborative effort, welcoming back many of the actors who were in that first production. *The Ghost Train* was a long-running success in London and on Broadway, packed with thrills, chills and laughter. In Maine near the Canadian border there's a legend of a phantom locomotive sweeping through a peaceful village leaving death in its wake. Rum and narcotic runners use this and the villagers' superstition to their advantage, but a "not as incompetent as he seems" detective clears up the mystery of the spectre and its attendant deaths. His seemingly silly actions result in the apprehension of the evildoers, and the little village and its station are finally at peace. For sheer creeping mystery, it's a play without peer.

We will finish off our 2020 season with our yearly pantomime — this year it will be *Peter Pan* (November 27 to December 6) by James Barry. Emily Duberville will direct this family-friendly tradition and will challenge herself even further than she has in past years. While it's done in a modern panto style, the story remains faithful to the original. Peter Pan and Tinkerbell lead Wendy Darling and her brothers on an adventure to Neverland, leading to the final showdown with Peter's enemy, Captain Hook (and Hook's enemy, the crocodile). Boo and hiss our baddies and cheer and clap the cast in this traditional family panto that will delight with lots of singing and dancing. We can assure you that you've never seen Tiger Lily quite like this! It's a magical adventure, and as previous audiences can assure you, the panto is something *not* to be missed!

Get information about these plays, as well as all the other events happening at the Station Theatre, at <smithsfallstheatre.com>. We have monthly movie weekends and a music series that promotes local and Canadian talent. Sign up for our newsletter so you'll never miss a thing. Also, as we head into the new year, 2020 season vouchers are on sale. This is the best way to get yourself a great deal on live theatre in the area (or give them as a new year's gift). We also have an Administrator at the theatre on weekdays from 9AM to 12PM to answer any questions you may have, to assist with renting the space, or to just show you around to see what it's all about. Katharine can be reached at 283-0300. We're so grateful for the patrons who return over and over again to share a fun evening of theatre together. We look forward to delivering many more great experiences in 2020.

— Katharine Coleman

Up & At 'Em!

Okay, my friends, it's time to get off that couch, shed the loose sweatsuit, and at least make an attempt at activity. Up here on Carroll Side Road we're all about being outside at least twice a day, no matter if the temperature has plunged to

by Glenda Jones

minus one hundred, it's snowing or drizzling that nasty freezing rain stuff. The trick is to look up and appreciate the weather (she said, knowing she had no choice but to go walking!), to take pictures of the hanging trees, and pretend that this weather is exactly perfect, since there are no mosquitoes, no ticks and no earwigs. The dogs are ecstatic to be running through the snow, so I get caught up in their enthusiasm. Snowballs are hard to retrieve, but so much fun to chase. Neither they nor I tire of this game. It's all about the clothing: if you dress for the weather, you'll be fine out there.

Shake a leg, everyone! Time's a-wasting. And speaking of waist, it can be a distant memory when the excess of holiday eating creeps up on us.

Are you identifying more with the cat, who much prefers the heat vent in the living room, eschewing the cold like a rare disease? Nothing convinces her that outdoors would work for her constitutional. She doesn't own a sweatsuit, but if she did she'd be wearing it and declaring we were all crazy to be thinking of exercise and activity in January.

Shake a leg, everyone! Time's a-wasting. And speaking of waist, it can be a distant memory when the excess of holiday eating creeps up on us. Our exercise classes will take care of that, and I know we'll be back there huffing and puffing, just to stay fit enough to do everything else we are planning. (*I can see your eyes rolling. Stop that!*) Success starts with one step, and once you're out the door and into our group, you'll want to keep at it. Guaranteed, it's not going to hurt, and who knows, it might be the very thing to connect you with some new friends. If nothing else, it'll help you find your waistline again!

Once the blood is flowing to your brain, you've simply got to keep that organ going as well, so sign up for a course. The beauty of courses is they are usually non-judgemental. That is to say, no exams, no group projects, nothing to discourage you but your own confidence. So what if you take pottery and your bowl is wonky? So

what if your painting isn't going to the National Art Gallery any time soon? You still had fun trying it. You have nothing to lose but that old sweatsuit.

There now, I've managed to fill up three days a week for you. Idleness breeds... something we don't need or want, so let's have none of it. I suppose you could spend the fourth day shopping the January sales to find more appropriate attire than the aforementioned sweatsuit. Make sure you look for a jazzy colour to take away from the pallor that descends with lack of sunshine. My big purchase has gone to the dogs, literally: I've bought them all new brightly coloured leashes. I can content myself adequately as long as the dogs are pretty!

Day Five, and you're on a roll of activity now. Don't you feel ever so much better? Don't you hate people who make you snap to attention and be eternally busy? Don't you wish for one day of nothingness? Now, really, wouldn't that be a shame when so many people are putting so much effort into

organizing activities for the rest of us? The least we can do is humour them and see what they have to offer.

Day Six is the day you drag out the calendar and fill in the

blanks. Day One & Two: exercises; Day Three: craft course; Day four: shopping; Day Five: brain course. See how your week is filling in nicely? And we haven't even scheduled the dog walking time in there.

There is one day you can't programme. The day the winter storm descends, the roads are closed, the driveway is blocked, and maybe the power goes out. That's your free day when you can don the sweatsuit, light the wood stove, grab a book, and do nothing but make excuses.

When the storm day falls on a Saturday we are extra happy. We haul out the newspaper. Yes, we still get it and read every word. I can't fathom a day when I couldn't read an actual paper, not a little screen online that I can't navigate or earmark. So indolence can take over for a couple of hours, with extra coffee and maybe a sticky bun, and for once the dogs will be quiet for a half-hour. When the storm passes, we'll resume the regimen.

Day Seven, I'll leave to your own devices. Just promise me you won't spend the entire day swathed in that old sweatsuit, lolling on the couch and binging on Netflix. If need be, I'll loan you the dogs for a day and you can get out and enjoy the fresh air and crisp winter. We both might as well be freezing our fingers, and pretending we love this weather!

Read, Read, Read!

I confess: I own many, many books. Possibly more books than I can read in a lifetime. But I love, cherish and adore books, so I'll never stop buying them. They bring me joy. They teach me things. They offer me comfort. They have even, I will venture, saved my life. And they ask for nothing back.

by John Pigeau

It's not even a resolution I need to make: to continue to fill my shelves with more books in this shiny new year. I can unapologetically assure you — it will simply happen.

Recently, during the holidays, I had three good friends over for a music night (we play guitars and harmonicas, we sing with passion, we get silly; we talk and laugh with verve, letting loose for a while, forgetting our woes and worries), and one of my friends said to me, "I just noticed, Johnny, you have the same book in every room in your place."

He would be one to notice such a thing; he's a bestselling author. He's won the Governor General's Award for Poetry. His books of fiction and poetry have been translated into ten languages. He's also a fiction reviewer for the *New York Times Book Review*.

So, I said "huh," and gave that a bit of think.

Steve was referring to the book *Gift from the Sea* by Anne Morrow Lindbergh, and he was right. I keep a copy in my washroom, another on a night table in my bedroom, one in the kitchen prominently displayed on a shelf with other things that remind me of time spent by the lake, and one on an end table in the living room. Each is a different edition, so each has a different cover. And I love them all.

"I love that book," I told Steve, with not a trace of guilt. "It's filled with gentle, fresh, clear-minded wisdom. Whenever I see a copy — at a library book sale, in a second-hand shop — I buy it. I feel compelled to. Normally, I end up giving them as gifts."

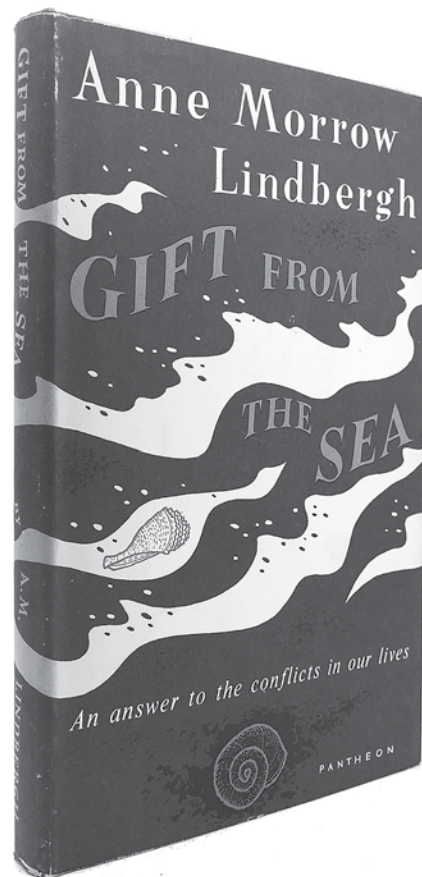
That night, in fact, I'd given a copy to my friend Ginger, whose birthday we were celebrating; she was quite delighted by the gift.

Earlier in the fall I'd spent ten nights on a writing retreat at a quiet, lovely, utterly charming little cottage in Wellington, Ontario — one block from the lake — and I'd given a copy of the book to my friends who owned the place as

a "thank you" present. That one I'd bought new from my local indie, on a whim, just before I'd left home — what better gift for a couple who live near Lake Ontario, and love spending time in the lake and on the beach? Before I left for home, both Rebecca and Stew thanked me for the book and told me how much they'd enjoyed it.

Giving books as a gift, I believe, is a form of genuine affection. Like a lasting hug. And what more meaningful gift than a book?

But all this coming from me should perhaps be taken with a grain of salt — I once owned a bookshop, after all. Started it from scratch, and it's still going strong, I'm very happy to say. I'm an author, too. I read voraciously. I'm still a bookseller at heart. And yes, maybe a bit of a book hoarder, too.



But I've recently learned, and quite happily so, there is a Japanese word for the practice of buying more books than you can read — *tsundoku*. The word "hoarder" is fairly abrasive, really. This Japanese word is rather its poetic antithesis.

So, what's the value of owning more books than you can read?

In short, the value is limitless.

I've researched this subject to a degree, and there are many other good theories out there, but that conclusion is my own. You see, when I walk around my home and pluck a book from its spot on a shelf, it occurs to me that my apartment is like a library. Even if I don't read all the books I own, they exist and they're within arm's length — and within each book is a unique story, or a series of valuable insights and lessons,

and sometimes sheer poetry, when essentially the lessons are yours alone to arrive at. That I own these books reflects my wish to read them, and by extension, to feel more joy, to learn more about the world and the people around me, to take comfort in the solace of shared experiences.

I have a weakness for library book sales; I visit them at least once a week, and very rarely leave empty-handed. Second-hand bookshops too — I can't pass one without stopping in. Normally I leave with a gem or two. I frequent my local independent bookshop, too, where they know me well, and where I spend a fair amount of my disposable income.

I've also bought a lot of books there for research on a book I'm writing, a personal account of mental illness and the unexpected end of my marriage, which plunged me into a serious, almost suicidal depression and resulted in years of near-constant anxiety and agonizing grief.

I can honestly say that a stack of books I've read on the subjects of grief and depression have changed my thinking, and my life, for the better. In particular, I'm thinking fondly of *A Grief Observed* by C.S. Lewis, *Darkness Visible* by William Styron, *Levels of Life* by Julian Barnes, and Camilla Gibb's *This is Happy*.

When my depression was severe, these books helped me. I was reading for insight, and for answers, really. I was reading for comfort, too. And I was reading to know I was not alone. On good days, I could read fiction — which on the worst of days seemed trivial and frivolous, unrelated to me — and I enjoyed the kind, gentle people and worlds created by Anne Tyler, among others.

No one book took a bullet for me. Yet I can confidently say, a small stack of them saved my life. At the very least, they saw me through the wilderness.

I hope the book I'm working on diligently might do the same for someone else, down the line.

The truth is also this: we don't know what books may touch us so beautifully and profoundly. Perhaps there exists a book on one of my shelves, yet unopened by me, that will offer me further joy, comfort or wisdom. Or maybe I've yet to bring that title home. So I'll keep up my practice *tsundoku* this year. With hope, joy, curiosity and gratitude.

Perhaps you will too.

I wish you happy reading, and book collecting, in the new year.

Happy New Year!

All the best in 2020
Looking forward to serving you
in the New Year!
Thank you to our wonderful
customers as we start our 47th
year of business!

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re-opening January 10.

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Fri. Jan. 11 **Jeff Callery** (Acoustic Folk/Country/Rock, Brockville) 6-9
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Fri. Jan. 24 **Robbie Burns Day** Music by **Turpin's Trail** and Fundraiser for Westport Arts Council 6-10, Buffet, Show + Charity \$50/Person+hst
Sat. Jan. 25 **Mark Bergman** (Rock/Folk, Brockville) 6-9
Fri. Jan. 31 **Mario Franco** (Acoustic Cuban Guitarist/Vocalist) 6-9
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A Little Light in the World

The Bigger Picture

"Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world. All things break. And all things can be mended. Not with time, as they say, but with intention. So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you." — L.R. Knost

If you had dropped by our place for a cup of coffee or a bite to eat sometime this past month, chances are you would have found

by Angie Arendt

yourself in a "do you remember..." kind of conversation. Maybe it's because the shorter days this time of year lend themselves to introspection. Maybe it's our tendency to get contemplative (and sometimes a bit nostalgic) during the holidays; considering the what, why, where, when and how of things like hope, peace, joy and love. Or possibly it's the turning of the calendar page and the tradition of reflecting on where we've been and where we're going in the days and years to come.

Whatever the reason, the laughter, tears, and sighs-too-deep-for-words that have accompanied these glimpses of the heart have been good for the soul... which, I suppose, is really the whole idea behind this season-of-light-and-life: to grow the heart and tend the soul. Mission accomplished. "Do you remember... your first love? ... the best present you ever gave or got? ... when you became skeptical about life?" My favorite, though? "Do you remember the first time you handled fire?" There have been stories of building bonfires-to-the-sky in the woods, singing late into the night around campfires at the beach, learning the proper way to start a fire in the fireplace, smoking cigarettes for the first time out behind the garage; rites and rituals of passage, all.

As for me? I was five when I handled fire for the very first time. I don't remember what I was wearing or who was sitting in front of or behind me in the fourth pew from the front of the church that Christmas Eve, but I most definitely remember practically bouncing out of my seat in excitement when the overhead lights dimmed and the organ started to play *Silent Night*. As my dad took his candle and bent over to light my wick from his, all of my wiggles went away. This, I knew, was no small thing. While everybody around me was singing "all is calm, all is bright" I stood stock-still, staring at the flame dancing on top of the little white taper nestled in my chubby little fingers, wondering how that light could seem so big and so little and so delicate and so strong all at the same time.

I know now that I wasn't just handling fire for the first time that night. I was also handling the fire-y questions of life for the first time, too: how we are all at once so little and so big, delicate and powerful, exhilarated and terrified, joyful and sad... but just as I started pondering, the overhead lights went out and the organ stopped playing and I snapped out of my thoughts to see what was going on. The grownups just kept singing those old, old words, though (in four-or-more part harmony, no less), holding their candles high like stars in the sky, making the dark seem a whole lot less scary. When the song was over, everybody just stood there, quiet and still, smiling big, eyes glistening. By the time the organ broke the silence with *Joy to the World* and the overhead lights flickered back on, I felt something in the air that I hadn't picked up on earlier: joy, maybe? Gratitude? Hope? Love? I couldn't say. I only knew that whatever it was, it was a good, good thing... and that a little light in the world can make a big difference.

— Angie Arendt is the Director at Big Stone House: a Center for Courageous Living <bigstonehouse.ca>.



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The gang at Dandelion Foods in Almonte invites you to help celebrate their 6th anniversary on Saturday, January 11. There will be cake!

Food, Fun, Friends Dandelion Foods' 6th Anniversary!

It all started in 2014 — that's when we first opened the doors to Dandelion Foods. Owners Sharon Lazette, Michael McGarry, Meg Pettipas and Farhat Sultana joined with a common interest in local food sustainability, health eating and community education. We filled the shelves with local products, organic produce, over 100 bulk items, every day grocer items, vitamins and supplements and so much more.

Today, Dandelion Foods has grown (expanding 1,000 sq. ft in early 2019) — offering thousands and thousands of products, hosting dozens of in-store educational events each year, and employing nine local knowledgeable and helpful staff.

The past six years have been fun, memorable, successful and life-changing and the community support has been tremendous. So it just wouldn't be the same if you didn't help us celebrate!

Please join us on Saturday, January 11 from 10AM to 2PM for Dandelion Foods' 6th annual Birthday Bash. Bring your friends and family and help us celebrate! And, of course, stay for a piece of gluten-free, vegan birthday cake from Almonte's SweetCheeks Kitchen! Dandelion is located at 451 Ottawa Street (next to Equator Coffee) in Almonte <dandelionfoods.ca>.

— Meg Pettipas

HummBits

Practical Caregiver Training

Do you know an unpaid caregiver who cares for a loved one with a life-limiting illness at home, in a retirement residence or in long-term care? A new four-week Practical Caregiver Training, developed by Champlain's Hospice Palliative Care program, will be offered for the first time in Perth in the new year. It will cover the following topics: Advance Care Planning, Lifts & Transfers, Providing Personal Care, What to Expect at the End of Life, Medication Management, Communication Skills and Self-Care. This hands-on training will make the caregiving experience safer and less stressful for both the caregiver and their loved one.

The course begins on February 24 and will run on Monday mornings from 9AM to 12:30PM at Algonquin College's Perth Campus (7 Craig Street in Perth). For more information, please email Anne at <practicalcaregivinglanark@gmail.com> or phone Rebecca at 267-6400 x28.

Standing Room Only!

On January 19, the well-known big band Standing Room Only invites everyone to their popular Sunday afternoon tea dance for ballroom and swing dancers. Now in their 14th year, this will be the SRO's second tea dance of the 2019/20 season, and will feature vocalist Helen Glover.

Helen has performed at private events, local clubs and the Ottawa Jazz Festival, and very much enjoys performing with the SRO big band. The dance will be held at the Almonte Old Town Hall from 1-4PM (doors open at 12:30). Admission is \$14 per person or \$25 per couple, cash only, and reservations are not required. For more information visit <sroteadances.org> or follow them on Facebook.

Music for a Sunday Afternoon

On Sunday, January 19, the Kanata North Concert Series presents "She's Still Here: Music by Women". Pianists Anneli Loepp Thiesen and Olivia Adams will take you on a musical journey through centuries of music by women composers. The concert will take place at 3PM at St. John's Anglican Church, located at 325 Sandhill Road in Kanata North.

All are welcome, and admission is by donation at the door. For more information about this and other "Music for a Sunday Afternoon" events, please visit <parishofmarch.ca> or call 592-4747.

Happy New Year!

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at
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We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy, healthy, and active 2020.

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Hanging Around the Valley

On Display in 2020...

Heritage Habitats at MVTM

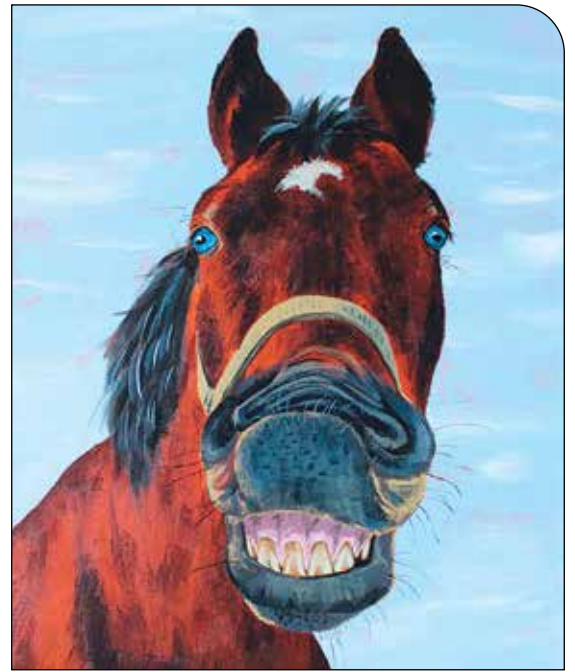
Opening on January 18 at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, *Heritage Habitats* includes four large-scale installations by Ginger Owens and Vicki VanAmeijden that explore collective memories with symbolism around kites, cairns, groves and roots. There will be a closing vernissage on Saturday, March 14 from 2-4PM. For more details, hours and directions, please visit <mvmtm.ca>.

by Miss Cellaneous

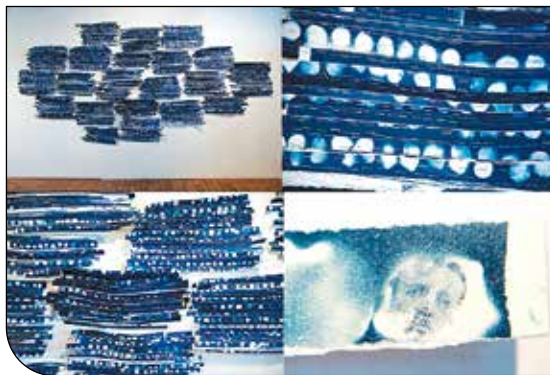
MERA Presents *The Artful Auni*

Come on out to MERA on Saturday January 11 at 1PM for a vernissage for the latest art exhibition at MERA. "The Artful Auni" features the work of Auni Milne, a visual artist living in the Lanark Highlands. When not creating her personal work, Auni works as a graphic designer and illustrator. You can see her professional work at <sumackloft.com>.

Growing up in an artistic family means Auni has been drawing ever since she could hold a piece of chalk. As a child she spent all her time either drawing animals, outdoors trying to find and pick up as many creatures as she could, or with her head in a book — about animals!



Auni Milne's art is at MERA in January



Explore *Heritage Habitats* at the Textile Museum!

Auni attended a school of Beaux-Arts in France as a youth and became a graphic designer and illustrator as a way to be able to make a living in a way that accesses her creativity. She lives deep in the forests of Lanark County in a newly built hand-crafted log house, surrounded by the stunning natural beauty of the local flora and fauna, and is inspired by these to produce drawings and paintings that reflect that beauty.

Auni explores the reality that we humans are merely another species of animal, since she feels it's important to the future of our planet that we remember our connection to this world of ours, and that we share it with many other animals who are no less nor more valuable than we are. She works primarily in acrylic, watercolour, graphite, and charcoal.

MERA is located at 974 Conc 9A Dalhousie in McDonalds Corners <meraschoolhouse.org>.

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Recycling Clothing: What's Next?

Almonte found its beginning through production of woolen textiles. The first woolen mill, Ramsey Woolen Cloth Manufacturing Company, was incorporated in 1851. Over a period of time mills were established on seven different sites. By the late 19th century Almonte was known as the "little Manchester" of Canada. These mills produced high quality textiles that were shipped to manufacturers that created beautiful woolen articles of clothing that wore well for many years. When it became possible to generate extremely durable synthetic textiles from petroleum and coal products, the market for woolen textiles declined and gradually the woolen mills were closed. The last one, located on the site of Millfall Condominium, was shut down around 1985.

The gradual decline in the woolen industry led, of course, to unemployment and the need for modestly priced clothing. In response, community-minded people with vision established the Almonte Community Coordinators, more commonly known as The Hub, in 1974. Its purpose is to enable people to purchase inexpensive, gently used second-hand clothing and other articles. This activity generates funds to support community projects and assists women to develop new skills. While recent news stories have made us doubtful that companies claiming to recycle materials are actually achieving

this, there is no question that today The Hub works hard not only to meet their original goals but also to ensure that whatever comes their way is diverted from landfill sites.

Today we live in a world where, generally speaking, people treat clothing as stylish consumables with a fairly short "best before date" and expect to pay as little as possible for these. Recently, the CBC reported in its "What On Earth" newsletter the following:

- Production of crops and fibres used in fashion is responsible for 10 percent of global carbon emissions.
- About 17 to 20 percent of global industrial water pollution comes from the dyes used to colour clothing.
- North Americans directed 9.5 million tonnes of clothing to the landfill in 2019 — this despite the fact that 95 per cent of those items could be reused or recycled.

While efforts to keep clothing out of the landfill are very important, reduction of our consumption of "disposable" clothing must also happen. One possibility is certainly to shop in second-hand stores. Another is to repurpose or resize clothing languishing in the back of our closets or to use fabric taken from clothing made of good quality material but no longer wearable. This past fall, the Centre For Creative Living (CFCL), a program of St. Paul's Anglican Church in Almonte, piloted a program to do exactly

that under the talented leadership of costume designer Ingrid Hamster. As a follow-up, CFCL will be offering two eight-week programs in succession this winter. Ingrid will teach participants the art of repurposing clothing to create new, usable items for themselves and/or for market. The program includes three levels, each building on the last.

In Level One, participants will artfully design and produce a series of small items (for example a pillow cover, a bag, an apron and a pair of mitts) using fabric cut from unusable pieces of clothing. You will learn how to follow a simple pattern, create button holes, insert zippers, do appliqué etc.

Level Two will focus on resizing and/or redesigning clothing to make these items attractive and wearable. You will learn how to take measurements properly and to resize or reshape clothing pieces of your choice.

In Level Three you will design clothing using a combination of fabrics rescued from second-hand and/or unusable clothing. You will learn to recognize and select fabrics that will work well together, create a generic block pattern, and create a one-of-a-kind spring jacket for yourself.

Participants can begin at any level and progress at their own speed. Not only will



Learn the art of repurposing clothing from costume designer Ingrid Hamster in the new year

this fun-filled program enable you to reduce pollution, your carbon footprint and contribution to landfill sites, it will also save you money and provide an opportunity for you to enjoy a new, very useful creative activity. The program will take place at St. Paul's Anglican Church Hall in Almonte from January 16 to March 5 and from March 12 to April 30 on Thursdays from 9AM to noon. The cost is \$180 per 8-week series.

To register, please email Sue Evans at <cfcl@stpaulsalmonte.ca> by January 10 indicating which level you would be interested in. St. Paul's provides subsidies for those for whom the cost would be a barrier. — Sue Evans

Happy New Year!

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Out of Sight... Out of Murder

Perth's Studio Theatre is determined to help you beat the post-holiday blahs with their production of *Out of Sight... Out of Murder* by Fred Carmichael — a comedy-thriller that's bound to entertain. "It's a comedy with no Trumpian overtones," chuckles director Grey Masson.

This play has it all: blackouts, lightning, a haunted mansion, a bewildered author, and all the dicey characters of an Agatha Christie thriller... any one of whom could be a killer. The difference? The characters are appearing one by one and arguing about their allotted roles with their author!

They include: Cogburn the quintessential butler (Martin Treffers), Addie the pregnant maid (Annie West), the combative spinster (Roberta Peets), a young hero (Charles Henderson), the lovely ingénue Kay (Natalie Grey), and of course the ever-sophisticated, intelligent and caustic woman of a certain age Lydia (Juli Heney) and her crooked millionaire husband Jordan Dillingham (Ken Wiles). There is one more very real character, the long-suffering and very down-to-earth housekeeper Mina, portrayed by Joanna McAuley-Treffers. "I love playing Mina — she's very sturdy, simple, honest and I love all her expressions," explains McAuley-Treffers.

The plot follows Peter Knight, a once-successful author, who has been sent by his publisher to a remote mansion in Vermont where another author has died under mysterious circumstances. It's been a few years since Knight's had a successful book, and the macabre setting has been chosen to jump-start his imagination. An electrical storm, the sinister atmosphere and a receptive mind create the perfect conditions for Knight's characters to materialize around him. "I'm surprised by how quickly Peter is accepting of the madness around him," says Lucas Tennant, who portrays Peter.



From left: Juli Heney, Natalie Grey and Charles Henderson in a scene from the Studio Theatre's production of *Out of Sight... Out of Murder*. The play opens in Perth on January 16.

Together, these highly opinionated characters inadvertently help our struggling author cement a plot, as one after another succumbs to a diabolical killer's machinations. All Peter has to do is stay alive!

"Peter is a man who is very much in his own element, but finds himself a fish out of water — even though it's a situation of his own creation," explains Masson. Masson's production, set in the 1980s before cell phones and computers (and in the days of big shoulders, big hair and big make-up) promises to delight the senses and the intellect. "It's great fun — because of the imaginary characters, we get to ramp up the costumes — think *Dallas*, think *Dynasty*," says Grace Main, assistant costumer.

Wit, comedy, romance and suspense all blend together to keep the audience on the edge of their seats.

Performances are scheduled for January 16, 17, 18, 23, 24 and 25 at 7:30PM as well as on January 19 and 26 at 2PM. Tickets are \$24 and can be purchased at Tickets Please, 11 Gore Street E., 485-6434, at <ticketsplease.ca> or at the door.

— Hedy Sorour

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 www.bigstonehouse.ca

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Comedy in Calabogie

The township of Greater Madawaska Recreation committee is proud to present the **Rash Comedy Bash** at the Calabogie Community Centre on Sunday, February 16. This night of comedy features award-winning comedian Rachele Elie as the headliner. Rachele has recently performed in Paris, Renfrew, Almonte and Carleton Place, and has also performed at Yuk Yuk's in both Toronto and Ottawa and at the Montreal Just For Laughs Comedy Festival. The opening act, Sebastien Bourgault, has also performed at Yuk Yuk's, among many other venues. The bar opens at 6:30PM, and crooner Johnny Vegas goes on at 7. The comedy starts at 8PM.

This show has been kindly sponsored by ten Calabogie businesses, along with other busi-



Catch the Rash Comedy Bash in Calabogie on February 16

nesses that have graciously purchased tickets to be given away through media outlets.

Tickets are \$25 each and are available from Councilor Lucie Perrier, the Bogie General Store and Charbonneau's Grocery. They are also available from <eventbrite.com>, and snoozers pay \$35 at the door.

All ticket proceeds will be donated to the Calabogie Food Bank and Bernadette McCann House, a Valley organization whose mission statement is ending abuse by providing safety, support and education to women who are in abusive situations.

A mini silent auction will also be held prior to the show, and proceeds of the auction will be donated to St. Joseph's School. Come on out for an evening of laughter for a good cause!

Arts CP Call to Artists

Arts Carleton Place (ACP) is seeking artists to participate in its **Spring Fine Art Show & Sale**. This year's show will be a reviewed/juried show, predominantly showcasing wall art (oil, acrylic, aquarelle, charcoal, mixed media, watercolour, pencil art, photography, etc.), but other forms of art will be considered as well. It will be held on the weekend of May 2 and 3 at the Carleton Place Canoe Club. There is no admission fee and lots of free parking.

The show can accommodate twenty-five artists. Booth sizes are either standard or large, and booth sharing is permitted for large booths only. ACP had

sales of \$16,000 at its last show, and this was double the previous year's totals.

To apply as a vendor, please visit <artscarletonplace.com/2020-acpfineartsale/> and complete the Expression of Interest by January 31. The reviewing committee will notify artists by February 10, at which time the registration fee will be due. Art sale payments will be taken at a central cash, with a small commission to ACP (5% on cash sales and 7.7% on square debit or credit card sales) in support of ACP's bursary program. For details, please contact Suzanne at <smdeschenes1951@gmail.com>.


Creative Workshops to Beat the Winter Blues

MERA Schoolhouse in McDonalds Corners has an exceptional lineup of Saturday classes for winter 2020. In **Painting Birch Trees** (Jan. 18), artist Monica will provide you with ideas about background colour, texture and light. Everyone will take an original painting home (not a copy). On February 1 Reiki master Carolyn Lunn will introduce you to the meditative practice of **Beginner Dot Mandala** on your choice of card stock or canvas, using acrylic paints and basic tools. At the **Intro to Acrylics: Sunflowers** on February 15, artists Jan Griffiths and Heather Vriends will explore technique, light and shadow and colour theory. You will complete a painting of a sunflower in this all-day class (lunch is potluck). February 29 brings **Pass the Painting**, in which illustrator Lynn Shwadchuck will lead a fun, collaborative, fast-paced

workshop for inexperienced artists and experts alike. There will be a colour exercise with surprising results and you go home with a landscape painting!

At the March 14 **Introduction to Islamic Geometry**, graphic designer Sebastien Bacharach will introduce you to different families of Islamic geometric patterns. Learn traditional methods craftsmen have been using across the Islamic world for centuries. No math involved! March 28 is for **Telling Your Story**, where author Jean Rae Baxter will help you to create a memoir that captures a memory of a special person, place or time. "A memoir is a story from a life, not the story of a life."

All the times, costs and instructions can be found at <meraschoolhouse.org/mera-calendar> and on Facebook. Register soon, as class sizes are limited.




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Melissa Moves presents

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- Seniors Smooth Groove: Gentle + Enlivening**
Omnes, Perth
- Freedom Fridays: Dance Your Heart Out!**
Almonte Old Town Hall

www.melissamoves.net | 416.559.2676





Gerry Lee

The Evolution of Canada's National Park System
7:30 pm Friday, 31 January, 2020
in the Almonte United Church Hall

Visit: almontelectures.net for the series schedule

Art Lessons with Cathy Blake

at the Almonte Old Town Hall

Introductory Drawing
Warm-ups, contour line, parallel perspective, shading, proportions and "sighting" in various media.
Mondays 8 weeks from Feb. 3, 1:30-4, \$240

Mixed Media
Various approaches using acrylic paints, pre-painted papers, collage, photo transfers, oil pastels and watercolour, and other fun techniques.
Fridays 8 weeks from Feb. 7, 1:30-4, \$240

Info: catherine.blake7@gmail.com (better) or 613-853-1674



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- 200hr Hatha Yoga Certification**
Jan 16 - June 25 (Thursdays)
- 200hr Kundalini Yoga Certification**
Feb 14 - Sept 29 (Tuesdays)
- 30hr Yin Yoga Certification**
April 8, 15, 22, 29 (Wednesdays)
- 30hr Restorative Yoga Certification**
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Key for Two, Smiths Falls, Feb 14-23
Travelogue: UAE, Almonte, Feb 19
BOTr: Bill Durst Band, Westport, Feb 21
Frozen Jr., Carleton Place, Feb 21-Mar 1
NLHS Dinner, Almonte, Feb 21
Marion Bridge, Perth, Feb 27-Mar 8
Folkus: Campbell Woods & Kate Weekes, Almonte, Feb 29
Mid-Winter Milling, Almonte, Feb 29
AiC: Percussive Encounter, Almonte, Mar 7
Travelogue: New Orleans, Almonte, Mar 18
BOTr: David Gogo, Westport, Mar 20
Soup for Thought, Almonte, Mar 28
Folkus: Ian Sherwood w/Evangeline Gentle, Almonte, Mar 28
The Ten Collective, Almonte, Apr 3-5
Maple Run Studio Tour, Pakenham, Apr 4, 5
BOTr: Miss Emily, Westport, Apr 17
AiC: Beyond Borders, Almonte, Apr 18
Tempting Providence, Perth, Apr 23-May 3
The Fantasticks, Smiths Falls, Apr 24-May 3
Folkus: Leverage for Mountains & The Pairs, Almonte, Apr 25
Steve Poltz, Perth, Apr 28
Arts CP Spring Show/Sale, CP, May 2, 3
BOTr: David Vest, Westport, May 8
Mother's Tea, Appleton, May 10
This Year Next Year, Perth, May 28-Jun 7
Priorpalooza, Arnprior, Jun 6
Enter Laughing, Smiths Falls, Jun 12-21
Strawberry Social, Appleton, Jun 28
Almonte Celtfest, Jul 3-5
Stewart Park Festival, Perth, Jul 17-19
Alice in Wonderland, Smiths Falls, Aug 21-30
Teddy Bear Picnic, Appleton, Aug 29
Almonte Fibrefest, Sep 12-13
Apple Pie Fest & Classic Car Show, Appleton, Sep 13
The Ghost Train, Smiths Falls, Sep 25-Oct 4
Peter Pan, Smiths Falls, Nov 27-Dec 6

Visual Arts

Vernissage: Auni Milne, Jan 11, 1-3PM. MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners. meraschoolhouse.org
Almonte Quilters' Guild, Jan 20, 7-9PM. All welcome. Almonte Civitan Hall, Almonte. Guests \$5
Meet the Artist: Meed Barnett, Jan 23, 7-9PM. MixedMEEDia. Fairview Manor, Almonte
Lanark Co. Camera Club Mtg, Jan 28, 7-9PM. All skill levels. Rm 104. Algonquin College, Perth
Lanark County Quilters Guild, Jan 28, 1PM-3PM. Speaker: fabric sales rep. Lions Hall, Perth. lanarkcountyquiltersguild.com. \$5 guests

Theatre

Judy, Jan 10, 7PM. Film. Studio Theatre, Perth. 267-7469, ticketsplease.ca. \$10 (\$12 adv)
Adventure In Your Ear LIVE!, Jan 12, 7-8:30PM. Live scripted comedic series. Curious & Kind, Almonte. curiousandkind.ca. \$10
Auditions: Plan 9 from Outer Space, Jan 13 & 20, Musical w/ 5-piece rock band. Shows Apr 17-May 3, email for audition time (will be after 6:30PM). Full Circle Theatre, Perth. 267-1884, barndoorproductions.ca

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<p>Fairview Manor Lobby presents Meed Barnett's <i>MixedMEEDia</i> Mississippi Valley Textile Museum presents Ginger Owens & Vicki VanAmeijden's Heritage Habitats <mvmtm.ca> [from Jan 18] MERA Schoolhouse presents <i>The Artful Auni</i> — art by Auni Milne <meraschoolhouse.org> The Almonte Library Corridor Gallery presents Brian Ling's acrylic landscapes</p>	<p> 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Masonic Lodge 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Carleton Place 🎵 Open Mic w/Bill Martin, Juke Joint Soul Kitchen 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club </p>	<p> 🎵 Open Jam w/Lanark County Revival, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Where Is My Mind Trivia Night, Bowie's </p>	<p> 🎵 Karaoke, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed, Almonte 🎵 Open Mic w/Kevin Choffe, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Open Stage, Bowie's </p>
<p> 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Masonic Lodge 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Carleton Place 🎵 Open Mic w/Bill Martin, Juke Joint Soul Kitchen 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club </p>	<p> 🎵 Olde Time Bingo, Carleton Place 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club </p>	<p> 🎵 Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club 🎵 Open Jam, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Where Is My Mind Trivia Night, Bowie's </p>	<p> 🎵 Karaoke, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed, Almonte 🎵 Open Mic w/Kevin Choffe, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Open Stage, Bowie's 🎵 Toastmasters, Carleton Place </p>
<p> 🎵 Auditions: Plan 9 from Outer Space, Perth 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Masonic Lodge 🎵 Open Mic w/Bill Martin, Juke Joint Soul Kitchen 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club </p>	<p> 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Carleton Place 🎵 Music Trivia, Almonte Lobby Bar 🎵 Olde Time Bingo, Carleton Place 🎵 Redneck Limousine, Brew Revolution 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club </p>	<p> 🎵 Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club 🎵 Meditation & Associated Processes, Perth 🎵 Open Jam, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Travelogue: S. Africa & Zimbabwe, Almonte 🎵 Where Is My Mind Trivia Night, Bowie's </p>	<p> 🎵 Karaoke, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed, Almonte 🎵 Open Mic w/Kevin Choffe, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Open Stage, Bowie's 🎵 Out of Sight, Out of Murder, Perth 🎵 Perth Breast Cancer Support Group </p>
<p> 🎵 Almonte Quilters' Guild 🎵 Auditions: Plan 9 from Outer Space, Perth 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Masonic Lodge 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Carleton Place 🎵 Open Mic w/Bill Martin, Juke Joint Soul Kitchen 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club </p>	<p> 🎵 Music Trivia, Almonte Lobby Bar 🎵 Olde Time Bingo, Carleton Place 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club </p>	<p> 🎵 Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club 🎵 Judy, Perth 🎵 Open Jam, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Where Is My Mind Trivia Night, Bowie's </p>	<p> 🎵 Judy, Smiths Falls 🎵 Karaoke, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Meet the Artist: Meed Barnett, Almonte 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed, Almonte 🎵 Open Mic w/Kevin Choffe, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Open Stage, Bowie's 🎵 Out of Sight, Out of Murder, Perth 🎵 Toastmasters, Carleton Place </p>
<p> 🎵 Cancer Support Group, Almonte 🎵 Carp Celtic Jam, Masonic Lodge 🎵 Open Mic w/Bill Martin, Juke Joint Soul Kitchen 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club </p>	<p> 🎵 Hackberry Men's Shed, Carleton Place 🎵 Lanark Co. Camera Club Mtg, Perth 🎵 Lanark County Quilters Guild, Perth 🎵 Music Trivia, Almonte Lobby Bar 🎵 Olde Time Bingo, Carleton Place 🎵 Smiths Falls Duplicate Bridge Club 🎵 Traditional Irish Session, Bowie's </p>	<p> 🎵 Almonte Duplicate Bridge Club 🎵 Meditation & Associated Processes, Perth 🎵 Open Jam, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Where Is My Mind Trivia Night, Bowie's </p>	<p> 🎵 Karaoke, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Naismith Men's Shed, Almonte 🎵 Open Mic w/Kevin Choffe, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Open Stage, Bowie's </p>

Out of Sight... Out of Murder, Jan 16-18, 23-25 at 7:30PM; Jan 19 & 26 at 2PM. Mystery-comedy. Studio Theatre, Perth. studiotheatreperth.com. \$24, \$10 student
 Film Night International presents **Judy**: Jan 22, 2 & 7PM (Full Circle Theatre, Perth); Jan 23, 2 & 7PM (Station Theatre, SF). filmnightinternational.blogspot.ca. \$12
Chasing Ice, Feb 1, 6:30PM. Shift Happens documentary series. Studio Theatre, Perth., ticketsplease.ca. \$17 (\$12 student)

Music

Little Christmas Concert, Jan 5, 2-5PM. Blue Skies Community Fiddle Orchestra & guests. Maberly Hall, \$10 at the door, kids 12 & under free. 278-2448
BOTr: Jack de Keyzer Band, Jan 17, 18, 7-11PM. Blues on the Rideau. The Cove, Westport. 1-888-COVE-INN, bluesontherideau.ca. \$70 buffet/show

Folkus: Good Lovelies w/Space Between, Jan 18, 8PM. Folkus Concert Series. \$30 (series of 4: \$90) at Mill St Books, folkusalmonte.com, door. Almonte Old Town Hall. 256-9090, folkusalmonte.com
Music for a Sunday Afternoon, Jan 19, 3PM. Music by women composers, on piano. St. John's Anglican Church, Kanata North. 592-4747, parishofmarch.ca. By donation
SRO Big Band Tea Dance, Jan 19, 1-4PM. w/vocalist Helen Glover. Almonte Old Town Hall, Almonte. sroteadances.org. \$14; \$25 couple (cash only)
AiC: Inspired by Virtuosos, Jan 26, 2PM. Almonte in Concert. Tix: almonteinconcert.com. Almonte Old Town Hall. almonteinconcert.com. \$35/\$15; series available
Trad Song Pub Session, Jan 26, 2-4PM. Join in. Anyone can lead. The Barley Mow, Almonte. 355-5552, shantyman.ca/almonte-trad-songs
Ashton Pub (Ashton, 257-4423): Sun Open Mic, 2-5PM

The Cove (Westport, 273-3636): Sun Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, 1-4PM
 Jan 3 David James Allen, 6-9PM
 Jan 4 Head over Heels, 6-9PM
 Jan 10 The Principals: Dave Balfour & Jamie Campbell, 6-9PM
 Jan 11 Jeff Callery, 6-9PM
 Jan 24 Robbie Burns Day w/Turpin's Trail, 6-10PM, trad.buffet+show \$50
 Jan 25 Henry Norwood, 6-9PM
 Jan 31 Mario Franco, 6-9PM
 Feb 1 Country Pickin' Mayhem Band w/ Shawn McCullough, 7-11PM, buffet+show \$60
Juke Joint Soul Kitchen (Carp, 470-8888): 7PM. Mon Open Mic w/Bill Martin
 Jan 18 Lanark County Revival
Almonte Lobby Bar @Riverside Inn (Almonte, 461-2745): Jan 14, 21, 28 Tue Music Trivia, 8PM
Brew Revolution (Stittsville, 877-2121): Jan 3 Dale Yuke, 7-10PM
 Jan 14 Redneck Limousine, 7-10PM
 Feb 1 The Keystings (full band), 8-11PM

Bowie's (Smiths Falls): Wed Trivia Night, 8-10PM; Thu Open Stage, 8-11PM; Fri New Music, \$5-10 sugg'd cover, 8-11PM; Sat (excl 18) Funk Night! 8PM
 Jan 3 Ron Mills & Tom Watson
 Jan 10 Steve Stacey & Craig Robertson
 Jan 17 Mike Kerr & Dave Dino White
 Jan 19 Songwriter Series: Craig Cardiff, 8-11PM, \$25/\$20adv
 Jan 24 Dimestore Playboys & J Raymond Lavoie
 Jan 28 Traditional Irish Session, 6PM
 Jan 31 Slo Tom & the Handsome Devils
Calabogie Brewing Co. (Calabogie, 752-2739): Fri Vocals for Locals, 5:30-8:30PM
Carp Masonic Lodge: Mon Carp Celtic Jam, 7-9PM
Cheshire Cat (Carp, 831-2183): Mon Trivia, 8-10PM
 Jan 4 Kelly Sloan, 8-10PM
 Jan 11 Curtis Chaffey, 8:30-10:30PM
 Jan 18 Keystings, 8:30-10:30PM
 Jan 25 Me & Him, 8:30-10:30PM

JANUARY 2020

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Dale Yuke, Brew Revolution 🎵 David James Allen, The Cove 🎵 Joseph McDonald, O'Reilly's Pub 🎵 Logan Brown, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Mississippi Blues Society Open Jam, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Ron Mills & Tom Watson, Bowie's 🎵 Textile Traditions Birthday Sale, Almonte 🎵 Vocals for Locals, Calabogie Brewing Co. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Blues & Classic Rock w/AI Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Funk Night!, Bowie's 🎵 Head over Heels, The Cove 🎵 Kelly Sloan, Cheshire Cat Pub 🎵 Skyler Radmore, Lumbertown Ale House 🎵 Textile Traditions Birthday Sale, Almonte 🎵 Twelfth Night Wassail, McDonalds Corners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Little Christmas Concert, Maberly 🎵 Ashton Open Mic, Ashton Pub 🎵 Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak 🎵 Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Sitting on Sundays, Almonte
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Jon Van Wingerden, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Judy, Perth 🎵 Shawn McCullough, O'Reilly's Pub 🎵 Steve Stacey & Craig Robertson, Bowie's 🎵 The Principals: Dave Balfour & Jamie Campbell, The Cove 🎵 Valley Mountain feat. Ellen Daly, Ridge Rock Brewing Co. 🎵 Vocals for Locals, Calabogie Brewing Co. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Dandelion Foods Anniversary, Almonte 🎵 Blues & Classic Rock w/AI Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Curtis Chaffey, Cheshire Cat Pub 🎵 Funk Night!, Bowie's 🎵 Jeff Callery, The Cove 🎵 Spencer Scharf, Lumbertown Ale House 🎵 Vernissage: Auni Milne, MERA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Adventure In Your Ear LIVE!, Almonte 🎵 APEX Jazz Band, The Royal Oak 🎵 Ashton Open Mic, Ashton Pub 🎵 Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Sitting on Sundays, Almonte
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 BOTR: Jack de Keyzer Band, Westport 🎵 Chris Strang, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Mike Kerr & Dave Dino White, Bowie's 🎵 Out of Sight, Out of Murder, Perth 🎵 Trivia Night & Shepherd's Pie Dinner for Fenner, Bolingbroke 🎵 Vocals for Locals, Calabogie Brewing Co. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Blues & Classic Rock w/AI Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 BOTR: Jack de Keyzer Band, Westport 🎵 Folkus: Good Lovelies w/Space Between, Almonte 🎵 Keystings, Cheshire Cat Pub 🎵 Lanark County Revival, Juke Joint Soul Kitchen 🎵 Out of Sight, Out of Murder, Perth 🎵 Robby Miller, Lumbertown Ale House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Ashton Open Mic, Ashton Pub 🎵 Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak 🎵 Music for a Sunday Afternoon, Kanata North 🎵 Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Out of Sight, Out of Murder, Perth 🎵 Sitting on Sundays, Almonte 🎵 Songwriter Series: Craig Cardiff, Bowie's 🎵 SRO Big Band Tea Dance, Almonte
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Dimestore Playboys & J Raymond Lavoie, Bowie's 🎵 Eastbound of Bytown, Ridge Rock Brewing Co. 🎵 Henry Norwood, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Out of Sight, Out of Murder, Perth 🎵 Robbie Burns Day w/Turpin, Aô's Trail, The Cove 🎵 Steve Barrette Trio, The Swan at Carp 🎵 Vocals for Locals, Calabogie Brewing Co. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Blues & Classic Rock w/AI Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Chris Gagnon, Ridge Rock Brewing Co. 🎵 Funk Night!, Bowie's 🎵 Henry Norwood, The Cove 🎵 Logan Brown, Lumbertown Ale House 🎵 Me & Him, Cheshire Cat Pub 🎵 Out of Sight, Out of Murder, Perth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 AiC: Inspired by Virtuosos, Almonte 🎵 APEX Jazz Band, The Royal Oak 🎵 Ashton Open Mic, Ashton Pub 🎵 Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Out of Sight, Out of Murder, Perth 🎵 Robbie Burns Scottish Tea, Almonte 🎵 Sitting on Sundays, Almonte 🎵 Trad Song Pub Session, Almonte
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Almonte Lectures: Evolution of Nat'l Park System 🎵 Mario Franco, The Cove 🎵 Shawn McCullough, Fiddleheads Bar & Grill 🎵 Slo Tom & the Handsome Devils, Bowie's 🎵 Vocals for Locals, Calabogie Brewing Co. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Blues & Classic Rock w/AI Tambay, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Chasing Ice, Perth 🎵 Country Pickin' Mayhem Band w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Funk Night!, Bowie's 🎵 The Keystings, Brew Revolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🎵 Ashton Open Mic, Ashton Pub 🎵 Blues w/Redneck Limousine, Waterfront Gastropub 🎵 Magnolia Rhythm Kings, The Royal Oak 🎵 Open Mic w/Shawn McCullough, The Cove 🎵 Sitting on Sundays, Almonte

Fiddleheads (Perth, 267-1304): 8PM. Thu Open Mic w/Kevin Choffe
 Jan 3 Logan Brown
 Jan 10 Jon Van Wingerden
 Jan 17 Chris Strang
 Jan 24 Henry Norwood
 Jan 31 Shawn McCullough

Lumbertown Ale House (Arnprior, 623-8885): 8:30-11:30PM, no cover
 Jan 4 Skyler Radmore
 Jan 11 Spencer Scharf
 Jan 18 Robby Miller
 Jan 25 Logan Brown

O'Reilly's Ale House (Perth, 267-7994):
 Tues Brock Zeman, 8:30PM
 Jan 3 Joseph McDonald, 8:45PM
 Jan 10 Shawn McCullough, 8:30PM

Ridge Rock Brewing Co. (Carp, 470-2337): 8PM.
 Jan 10 Valley Mountain feat. Ellen Daly
 Jan 24 Eastbound of Bytown
 Jan 25 Chris Gagnon

The Swan at Carp (Carp, 839-7926):
 Jan 24 Steve Barrette Trio, jazz, 7-10PM

The Royal Oak (Kanata, 591-3895): jazz on Sun, 2-5PM
 Jan 5, 19, Feb 2 Magnolia Rhythm Kings
 Jan 12, 26 APEX Jazz Band

The Waterfront Gastropub (CP, 257-5755): Wed Open Jam 9PM; Thurs Karaoke 9PM; Sat Blues/Rock w/AI Tambay 3-6PM; Sun Blues w/Redneck Limousine 3-6PM
 Jan 3 Mississippi Blues Society Jam, 8:30PM

Community

SF Bridge Club, Mon 7PM, Tue 1PM. 256-4747. SF Legion

Olde Time Bingo, Tue 7PM. Held by CP Civitans in CP Arena upper hall

Almonte Bridge Club, Wed 7PM (except Jan 1). 256-4747. Almonte Legion

Sitting on Sundays, Sun, 10AM. Meditation, mindfulness. Big Stone House, Almonte. bigstonehouse.ca. By donation

Naismith Men's Shed, Jan 2, 16, 30, 8AM, breakfast, Superior Restaurant, Almonte; Jan 9, 23, 9AM, meeting, Mill of Kintail gatehouse. 461-0013. \$1/yr

Toastmasters, Jan 9 & 23, 7-8:30PM. Guests free. Riverview Snrs' Residence, 204 Lake Ave., CP. RSVP 250-9282

Hackberry Men's Shed, Jan 14, 28, 7:30AM breakfast, Gourmet Restaurant, CP; Jan 6, 20, 7PM meeting, Workshop opposite 98 Donald St., CP. 461-0013. \$1/yr

Meditation & Associated Processes, Jan 15, 29, 1:30-3PM, Perth Library. 225-4675, by donation

Textile Traditions Birthday Sale, Jan 3-4, 9:30AM-5PM. Up to 40% off. Textile Traditions, Almonte. 256-3907

Twelfth Night Wassail, Jan 4, 7-9PM. Share music, potluck snacks, games. MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners. meraschoolhouse.org

Dandelion Foods Anniversary, Jan 11, 10AM-2PM. Food, specials, cake & more. 451 Ottawa St., Almonte. dandelionfoods.ca

Travelogue: S. Africa & Zimbabwe, Jan 15, 7PM. Bill Slade. Almonte Library, Almonte. 624-5306, missmillslibrary.com

Perth Breast Cancer Support Group, Jan 16, 7-9PM. Monthly mtg. Perth Family Health Centre, Perth. 812-4474

Trivia Night & Shepherd's Pie Dinner for Fenner, Jan 17, 6PM. Fundraiser for Tammy Fenner. ABC Hall, Bolingbroke. 273-8834. \$15

Robbie Burns Scottish Tea, Jan 26, 2-4PM. Scones, tea, music. Tix: Baker Bob's, Legion. Almonte Legion, Almonte. 257-8503, northlanarkregionalmuseum.com. \$10

Cancer Support Group, Jan 27, 10-11AM. Patients & survivors. Almonte Library, Almonte. 726-8040. Free

Almonte Lectures: Evolution of Nat'l Park System, Jan 31, 7:30PM. Gerry Lee. Almonte United Church, Almonte. almontelecures.net. free; donations accepted

To ensure that your event makes it onto our February calendar, please email the information to calendar@thehummm.com by January 20.

We are also accepting listings for the Claiming Column right through the end of 2020!



January 18 – March 14, 2020
HERITAGE HABITATS
 Ginger Owens and Vicki VanAmeijden

4 large scale installations that explore collective memories with symbolism around kites, cairns, groves and roots.

Closing Vernissage:
 Saturday March 14, 2 to 4PM



For information:
www.mvtm.ca

or 613-256-3754 ext. 7 3 Rosamond St. E., Almonte

THANK YOU

for mentioning that you saw their ad in theHumm!

Perth Resident Receives Education Award

Long-time timber framer and teacher Jason Gibson has been recognized for his dedication to teaching others the craft after receiving the Education award from the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals. Over the past 18 years, Gibson has worked with more than 400 students from across North America through his renowned six-day timber framing courses. The nomination for the award saw many past students and colleagues beam about his contribution to the craft.

For years Gibson owned and operated Gibson Timber Frames, which built custom homes and buildings for homeowners and businesses. In an effort to focus his energy on teaching, Gibson sold his business in 2019. Through his courses, Gibson says he sees the need and desire from his students to delve deep into a long-standing tradition they've never before explored. "It surprises me every time the variety of people who end up here in my barn," says Gibson. "They come from the city, the country, and everything in between."

Through his work, Gibson strives to keep the skills of traditional timber framing alive. During his course he engages students with hands-on work, teaching them the layout and cutting techniques of traditional square rule layout timber frame building — a style that began in North America in the early 1800s. Gibson also teaches tool use, including chisel use, hand saws, and how to plane large timber. By teaching these skills, he is helping to revitalize an almost forgotten craft.

At the end of the course, the students work together to raise their timber frame structure, re-creating the spirit of a community barn build — a method that rural farmers across Canada have relied on for centuries.

"There seems to be a thirst for this kind of hands-on, communal work," explains Gibson. "In a society where people look at screens all day and interact



Jason Gibson has been recognized by the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals

mostly online, there's a satisfaction that comes from working hard together to create something concrete."

The impact of Gibson's work is felt by more than just the students in his courses. He also gives back to a variety of communities. Gibson donates a portion of his profits to charities and has given more than \$50,000 over the past thirteen years. He supports charities such as WaterCan, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Guatemala Stove Project, Acceso International, WaterAid Canada, World Vision and Winter Warmth. He also gives to the Stewart Park Festival.

Now that he's focusing solely on teaching, Gibson hopes to expand his offerings. He plans on teaching up to four courses in 2020. His commitment to teaching has educators like Cameron Jones excited for what's to come. "Jason builds and designs timber frames, and yet it is the work he does in building people, young and old, in the process of passing down the tradition of heritage construction, that makes him one of the finest educators I have had the opportunity to witness and learn from," says Jones.

To find out more about Jason Gibson and his courses, please visit <timberschoolcanada.com>.

SUN FEBRUARY 16
 Calabogie Recreation Committee Presents
THE RASH COMEDY BASH
 An Evening Of Stand-Up Comedy
 with Opening Act and Crooner
 SEBASTIEN BOURGAULT
 WITH AWARD WINNING COMEDIAN
RACHELLE ELIE
 JOHNNY VEGAS (STARTS AT 7PM)
 FEATURING COMEDIANS SEEN ON
 OFF-JFL & TOFFEST, CFL42, WICF, The Comedy Store, HUCKY, RIDE, and more!
CALABOGIE COMMUNITY HALL
 574 MILL ST. - CALABOGIE, ON
 CASH BAR OPENS AT 6:30PM - COMEDY SHOW AT 8PM
\$25 ADVANCE TICKETS ON EVENTBRITE OR AT THE BOGIE GENERAL STORE OR LUCIE! | SNOOZERS PAY **\$35** AT THE DOOR
 THE TOWNSHIP OF GREATER MADAWASKA FOR MORE INFO GO TO CROWNINGMONKEY.COM

Antoine Lake
\$991,000

Imagine your dream home here!
 Or build a family retreat in the most idyllic setting.

Escape the stresses and strains of day-to-day life and reconnect with nature with an easy hike through the 200 acres of beautifully forested land with mainly mixed hardwood (maple, oak, beech, and ash), softwood (pine, spruce, cedar, and fir) where wildlife abounds.

A stunning 1670 feet of spectacular shoreline will have you enjoying the breathtakingly long views of secluded Lake Antoine, which is up to 40 feet deep and abundant with walleye, pike, and bass.

This property is also ideally suited as an investment opportunity with severance possibilities and very fitting for recreational business concepts such as campgrounds, resorts, tiny homes, or yurt rentals.

MLS 1175729

Jean Sharpe
 Sales Representative

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Black Tartan – No Contest!

Weetabix is in a self-congratulatory mood for having praised chef Ian Carswell and his Black Tartan Restaurant some time ago (theHumm, July 2017). We are pleased to report that both have continued to develop. Ian has been recognized as an outstanding talent and earned a place on the national stage by winning the Ottawa edition of The Great Canadian Kitchen Party. For those interested in cuisine and gastronomy, this is an important event and a significant honour.

by Sebastian Weetabix

Readers of this column know that Weetabix does not do “critical reviews” and will not be surprised that the idea of competitive events in a field like cuisine begs for some comment; herewith a few, and then back to topic. Virtually every human activity can be the subject of competitive ranking — the primary purpose of which is to bestow bragging rights and social credit — some of which can be monetized. The field of athletics is dominated by performance contests, both individual and team related. But what are outcome measures and what do they mean? In many cases, at least the first question is easily answered: “fastest” or “highest” are quantitative measures of performance that permit resolution higher than the limits set by the random variables of any course. Winning by a nose is still winning.

Meaning, of course, is a different matter — and winning by a nose is particularly appropriate to food since aroma is a key part of any dining experience. Weetabix would point out that second best is not the same as second rate. No Olympic qualifier can be fairly described as second rate, and even the Buffalo Bills (in their worst year) were clearly capable of playing at a level well beyond most college teams. So how and why is this relevant to competition between chefs? We should start with a brief examination of the idea of ranking. When only a single dimension of performance is measured this is simple; but when there are multiple attributes to consider, distillation of performance to yield a single numerical rank ranges from difficult to impossible. Hold this thought long enough for a rant on food criticism.

The rise of the internet and sites like Yelp have had devastating effect on serious food critics, since uninformed and unqualified posts can get the same attention and distribution as more considered opinion. Readers of sites that permit uncurated postings are subject to a barrage of opinion and have no way of knowing which comments are “paid advertising”, which are malicious, and which are genuine but

ignorant of any reference standards. Reading what has been accurately described as a “great washroom wall” is not informative, and few readers possess the ability to qualify the information presented there. On the other hand, free content draws readers, and there is no longer a willingness to pay for qualified opinion. Conscientious critics are an endangered species due to habitat loss!

Enter the “Culinary Contest” — food as entertainment and perhaps the salvation of critical standards. Reality TV shows aside, there are many media options that testify to the public’s interest in food and cooking. It is therefore a natural consequence of basic human instincts that formal competitions would develop in this field, but the issue of metrics of merit is complex, as is the fundamental landscape. Make things too simple and the whole enterprise is simply a burlesque — who cares about the time it takes to fry an egg, although this might matter if you need to hire a line cook. On the other hand, constructive creativity

is not simply a matter of combinatorial novelty. Blueberry coulis might have its place but probably not with lightly smoked trout roe. Enter the serious, qualified and knowledgeable judging panel and a credible venue.

The Great Canadian Kitchen Party (GCKP, formerly known as Gold Medal Plates) is an outstanding example of a constructive competition. Organized to help raise money and awareness for Canada’s Olympic Athletes, it provides an opportunity for selected chefs to get together in a collegial setting and show off their creativity and skills to their colleagues. In many ways this

“contest” benefits both participants and the industry as it combines the entertainment of trying to rank across multiple attributes with a qualified judging panel. Weetabix was fortunate to be able to chat with the formidable Anne DesBrisay who heads the Ottawa panel of GCKP. Anne, for those of you who don’t know, has written extensively on food in Canada and is a conscientious and careful reviewer. She described the GCKP events as an “opportunity for chefs to step away from safe menus, work as a team, and develop a dish that is competition worthy”. True that — and important to chefs since even being chosen to compete is a singular honor that is recognized by their peers. The industry of haute cuisine is surprisingly interconnected and GCKP plays an important role in developing collegial relationships and in providing public relations based on merit. It is a counterweight to the earlier-mentioned washroom wall. Because it is a national event, it also provides exposure that new talent could not afford; most public relations and advertising in the industry is, due to economics, local. For a young chef in a small town, simply being invited to participate is already a victory with benefits; to win at the regional level, in

competition with an outstanding group of peers, is an extraordinary and meaningful achievement!

Weetabix could not resist delivering congratulations in person, and Ian Carswell found time to comment on his experience with the GCKP. Besides being thrilled with the outcome of the contest, he remarked on the value of the collegial benefits of the whole experience. “Everyone was helpful and we enjoyed the camaraderie and exchange of information; it was a win just to participate! We wanted to show the food scene why we are here [Carleton Place, in case you missed it] and our dish reflects the heritage of Lanark County”. We wish Ian and his crew best at the Nationals, which are actually being held in Ottawa at the end of January.

Besides the regular menu, consider putting yourself in Ian’s hands via the Tasting Menu (where you can try something new and different), and note that the Black Tartan is open for lunch as well as dinner — an excellent venue for a business meeting or just a treat in mid-day. “Vaut Le Voyage.”



Chef Ian Carswell from Black Tartan Kitchen in Carleton Place recently won the Ottawa edition of The Great Canadian Kitchen Party. He competes at the national level in January!



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