

DECEMBER 2011

the Hum

Arts,
Entertainment
& Ideas

free



p.24 & 25

December's Events



The 2011 Gift Giving Guide



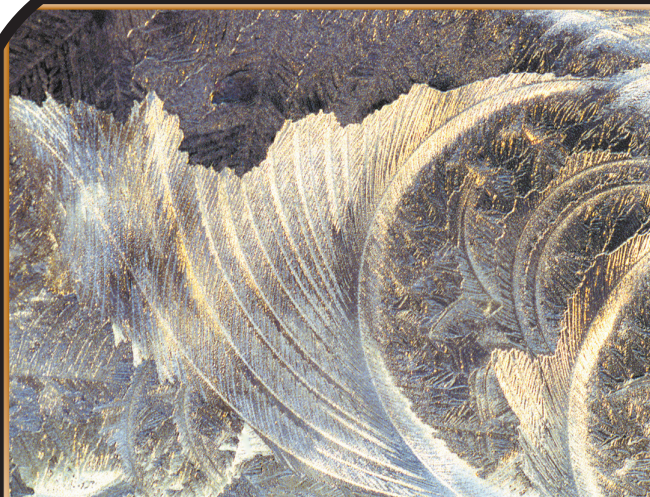
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Christmas Concerts

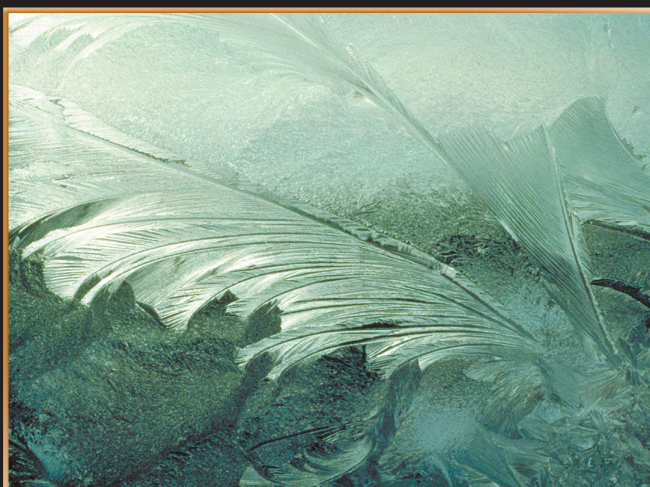


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Cheese for Ewe



The Art of Janice Street p.5



Valley
DESIGN CO.
22 Lake Avenue East, Carleton Place
257-1197
www.valleydesignco.com

Merry Christmas
Enjoy Valley Customs and Traditions.
May you have the Merriest of Times!
Open Christmas Eve 10-2, closed Christmas week
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"I liked it better when 'Peace on Earth' was at least a remote possibility!"



Who's Reading the Humm

Peter Foisy sent in this photo of **Mike and Sandy Madore** of Almonte. Peter wrote: Mike was there to race in the 2010 Winter Nationals at Orlando Speedworld in Florida, Feb. 9–13, five races in all. It was very cold that year in Florida as evidenced by the clothing they are wearing.

Editor's note: Mike may have been there to race, but Sandy looks like she's doing all the work!



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 and Promotions:

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

Assistant Editor:

Rona Fraser
rona@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, Lanark, Smiths Falls, Burnstown, White Lake, Balderson, and Ottawa. Our mandate is to connect and promote people and events in the small towns and rural communities of the Ottawa Valley — where the arts flourish and entertaining characters run amok!

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Thanks this month to:

everyone who read *theHumm* in 2011. You are the reason we keep on humming! And a special shout-out to those of you who even read "Thanks this month to!"

Readers Write

Christmas Shopping Orgy

The hype and hysteria which has arisen this year around so-called Black Days of Christmas shopping calls for a serious reality check. There is no doubt that gift-giving has a place in Christian celebration and that seasonal shopping is an excellent way to demonstrate support for our local merchants and their employees. Nonetheless, the encouragements for us to act like frenzied animals does nothing but debase the beauty of the Christmas message.

If we are determined to get swept up in any spending orgies this month, may I suggest we leap fully into spending in support of our local and critically underfunded hospitals, hospices and health care services. May I suggest we go crazy with support for Bernadette McCann House, Lanark County Interval House and Living Without Violence, who have worked ceaselessly to keep our wives and daughters safe from abuse. May I suggest we completely lose our minds in supporting our local animal shelters, our food banks, and organizations trying to protect our suffering natural environment. If these suggestions are not compelling enough to encourage more responsible spending orgies, it will not be difficult to identify countless other struggling causes who depend on our

financial support much more than the malls of upstate New York or the trash-makers of China. This is the season to remember the birth of Peace, not the cancer of Greed.

We wish all our Christian neighbours a joyous Holiday,
— Rev. Innen Parchelo, Red Maple Buddhist Congregation, Renfrew, ON

Humble Thought

One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas Day.
Don't clean it up too quickly.

— Andy Rooney

Oh, for the good old days when people would stop Christmas shopping
WHEN THEY RAN OUT OF MONEY

(author unknown)

Welcome to Almonte's Christmas Store!

You'll find hobby and sport ornaments, gorgeous gift baskets, stocking stuffers, seasonal décor, fresh flowers, fun jewellery, handbags and scarves for the gals, lots of puzzles for the guys, and much more!



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102 Mill St. Almonte, 613 256 1594, keepsakesgiftshop.com



A Gift for You
from Keepsakes

25% off
everything in the store
until December 24, 2011

Coupon must be presented, may not be combined with any other offer.

(Shopping at) Home for Holidays!

Welcome to the December issue of *theHumm*, and to the 2011 local Gift Giving Guide! If you're reading this (and we know you are), we're going to assume that you're already familiar with the

Kris & Rob Riendeau

whole local shopping schtick, so this year we're not going to preach to the choir, as it were. Nope — this year we'd like to ask you, early-adopters that you are, to become Local Shopping Ambassadors for your neck of the woods! Grab your relatives, friends and co-workers, have them meet you at your favourite independent café or restaurant, and invite them to spend the afternoon (or heck, the whole day!) visiting all those special spots you know and love so well.

The advantages are almost too numerous to enumerate, but we'll give it a try, in case you need help persuading any fence-sitters. On

the "what's in it for me?" front, there will be fewer line-ups, friendlier faces, shopkeepers and staff who know their stock intimately (and probably that of nearby businesses), free parking, and more often than not an emphasis on local, artistic, or niche products. On the "quality time" front, you and your friend(s) will be able to stroll at your leisure, try stuff on, not be pepper-sprayed (sorry, couldn't resist), and not have your conversation interrupted by "ATTENTION SHOPPERS" blaring over the P.A.

And finally, on the "enlightened self-interest" front, not only will you be contributing to your local economy, ensuring the health and vibrancy of your downtown core or neighbourhood, and supporting the merchants who in turn support all kinds of great causes — you are also far likelier to receive great local gifts from your friends!

Happy ambassador-ing, and happy, healthy holidays from your friends at *theHumm*.

A Wish List from Interval House

It can be the best of times... and it can be the worst of times. The Christmas season is full of opportunities to celebrate with family and friends, to feel connected with others and with our community. It can also be an incredibly stressful and depressing time, especially if you're struggling to overcome the trauma of an abusive relationship.

Sometimes just putting food on the table is challenging enough for women who are rebuilding their lives, never mind the added pressure of having to create a magical Christmas morning for the kids.

Luckily, Lanark County is a community that rallies around its most vulnerable members with remarkable strength and enthusiasm. Every year people come together and generously donate to the women and children who rely on the services of Lanark County Interval House. That level of community support makes a world of difference in the lives of our women and children.

This year, for those in our county who want to help, the shelter has some particular requests that would be most helpful to our clients:

- new, unopened toys (for any age, but we are in extra need of gift items for 10- to 12-year-olds and teens, both genders)
- pyjamas (for kids and moms)
- feminine hygiene products, toiletries (especially family size shampoo, body wash, body scrubbers/puffs, hairbrushes, deodorant — we have plenty of toothpaste and toothbrushes already)
- any other items donated will be put to good use for women and children in our own community

In order to have gifts prepared for all the families we serve, shelter staff are hoping to have donations in by December 16. To make a donation, please call 257-3469x27 and we can make arrangements for drop off or pick up. You can also drop items off at our As Good As New store on Bridge Street in Carleton Place and just label the items as "Christmas donation for the shelter". Your donations and support are greatly appreciated. Together we can make this Christmas season the best of times for women and children throughout Lanark County, at a time when they need it most.


Lanark County Interval House provides extensive support for children, youth and women who experience abuse, and can refer men to the appropriate resources. All the services are free and confidential and you do not need to be a resident of the shelter to access the services. Call 257-5960 or 1-800-267-7946, 24 hours a day, for any of our services.

Gift Giving Guide Shop Directory

Here's an alphabetical list of the shops that are participating in this year's Gift Giving Guide, followed by the town in which they are located and the page on which you can find their ad. Great gift suggestions can be found throughout this issue, organized in categories like "Gifts for Teenagers" (found on page 14), "Gifts for Environmentalists" (page 22), or the ever-popular "Gifts Made in the Valley" (page 31). No matter who's on your list, we're sure that you will find a great gift — and have fun doing so — right here in the small, independent shops of the lovely Ottawa Valley area.


Happy local shopping!

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Vintage Wear / Ware.....	Almonte, p. 13
the White Lilly	Almonte, p. 21
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WE'RE GIVING COLD WEATHER THE BOOT!

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\$15 OFF
FOOTWEAR
 (reg. priced only)
offer ends Dec. 24



Tofino Boot

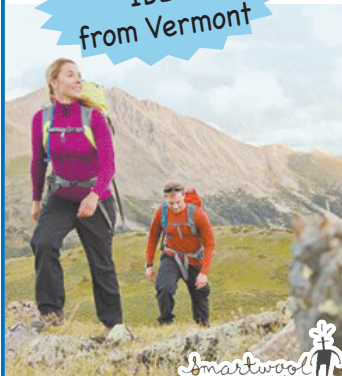


FIND A BETTER PRICE? WE'LL HAPPILY MATCH IT!

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 from Vermont




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More than a gift — it's whatever they want. The perfect gift for everyone on your list!

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Enjoying Your Fresh Christmas Tree

Christmas is just around the corner, and for many families a visit to the local Christmas tree farm is a wonderful part of their annual tradition. Freshly cut Christmas trees are just like plants and children... give them tender loving care and they will give you joy in return. If a few simple common sense steps are followed, your tree will last through the festive season and, in the case of Fraser Fir, well into the new year.

- Take your tree home and store it in a cool shady spot until it is time to put it up.
- Make a fresh cut, removing 1 inch from the trunk, just before putting it in a stand.
- Be sure you have a good stand that will hold a lot of water — it is worth the investment.
- Put your tree up away from a heat source — fireplace, heating duct, electric heaters.
- Be sure your light cords are damage-free.
- Turn off lights when you leave home or spend an extended time in another area of your house.
- Water, water, water. Trees are thirsty and may use up to a gallon of water daily.

One acre of trees produces enough to fulfill the daily oxygen requirement of 18 people! No wonder it feels so good to visit a tree farm to choose a tree. Fresh air, a walk outdoors, and a beautiful Christmas tree... now that's the spirit.

— Ria Ralph, Cedar Hill Christmas Tree Farm



Governor General's Literary Award Winner

theHumm would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to Perth poet **Phil Hall**, winner of the 2011 Governor General's Literary Award for poetry!

Phil won the prestigious award for his collection *Killdeer*, published by BookThug, a small Ontario press. The judges said *Killdeer* "realizes a masterly modulation of the elegiac through poetic time. It releases the personal from the often binding axis of the egoistic into that kind of humility that only a profound love of language — and of living — can achieve."

Phil Hall was also a finalist for the Governor General's Award in 2001.

Gifts for People Who Are Stressed Out

Crabtree & Evelyn Products for Men & Women, the White Lilly.....	\$6-45
Gift Certificate for 1-hour Therapeutic Massage, Kim Naraway, RMT.....	\$80
Gift Certificates for Yoga Classes, Yoga and Tea	\$25 & up
Handcrafted Hammock by Malcolm Williams, Riverguild	\$149 & up
Himalayan Crystal Salt Candle Holders, The Granary.....	\$20-25
Knuckle Boppers Puppets by Trish Leeper, Bittersweet Gallery.....	\$79
Large Decaf Latte, Free Humm & a Window Seat, Palms... the Coffee Shop	\$4.10
MediFlow Waterbase Pillow, Hands On Healing Centre	\$71
Primal Scream Therapy (aka Voice Lessons), Musicworks.....	\$108 / 4 sessions
The Ultimate Head Scratcher, Keepsakes	\$4.95

Studio Theatre Productions

Presents

An Evening of One Act Christmas Plays

The Christmas Tree'

by Norm Foster

Directed by Jeremy Dutton

A Child's Christmas in Wales

by Dylan Thomas

Directed by David Parry



Two Jolly Plays

One a timeless Welsh masterpiece

One that puts the merry in Merry Christmas!



December 15, 16 & 17 at 8:00 pm
December 18 at 2:00 pm at the

Studio Theatre
63 Gore St East, Perth

Tickets \$20 in advance at The Book Nook, 56 Gore Street E
\$22 at Tickets Please, 39 Foster St., (613) 485-6434
www.ticketsplease.ca (includes convenience fee)
\$22 at the door; \$10 student rush seats at the door with ID

*a) The Christmas Tree was first produced by Lunchbox Theatre, in Calgary, Alberta, Canada in November, 2008
b) The Christmas Tree is staged by arrangement with Pam Winter, Gary Goddard Agency, 10 St Mary St #305, Toronto, Ont, Canada, M4Y 1P9

BABY... it's cold outside!

Kentfield Kids,
doree's habit & Tin Barn Market
invite you to warm up to some holiday cheer

65 MILL STREET STYLE !

Come spend some time with us, get inspired,
and let us help you cross some names off your
holiday gift list.

* THURSDAY DEC 8th *

~ an after-hours holiday event ~

7 ~ 10 pm

3 funky shops all under one roof
..pop in for treats, giveaways & fun!

p.s. * FREE husband parking
available at the Barley Mow.



EXPERIENCE THE WARMTH
OF DOWNTOWN ALMONTE

Don't be left out of the loop... find our shops on FACEBOOK

Kentfield Kids
Your Brand Name Consignment Store & More.

Tin Barn Market
Create. Re-purpose. Re-invent. LOVE again.

doree's habit

ENTER to WIN

~A \$20 GIFT CARD~

Bring this ballot to any one of our stores between Dec 1-20 for
your chance to win a \$20 gift card from the shop of your choice.

NAME: _____ EMAIL: _____

Check the box if you are interested in hearing about
future specials and events from our shop.

☐ Kentfield ☐ doree's ☐ Tin Barn

Janice Street: Sharing the Emotional Power of Nature's Beauty

Janice Street celebrates nature's power to evoke human emotions through her magical photographic studies of its ephemeral beauty. Recently she published a book of photographs of her favourite subject: *Frost on Windows*. All celebrations should be so successful.

by Sally Hansen

Laughingly dubbing herself Jan-Ice, Street describes how, for the past twenty years, she has been searching for the right conditions to capture her marvelous portfolio of *Nature's Mysterious Art*, as it fleetingly appears as ice crystals on poorly insulated windows. This passion that began as a whim is now a major theme in her artistic production, adorning prints, calendars, CDs, and now a book.

When you first look at a large, beautifully executed print of a frost abstract, you're not sure what you are looking at. Like snowflakes, no two are alike. People ask her if she uses filters, or applies coloured gels to the backs of the windows. The answer is no. Never. The astonishing variety of colours, shapes and textures is the result of the refraction of incident light, much like the iridescence of the feathers of hummingbirds.

A Passionate Eye

Frost is Janice's favourite subject, not her only one. A member of the Ottawa Camera Club for decades, Street has won awards for best colour portrait (of a person) and best digital image (of a sombre but somehow reassuring November cornfield). A click on "Portfolio" on her home page at <janicestreet.ca> instantly reveals the full extent of her photographic range. Landscapes, architecture, water, skies, all captured with a freshness and originality that seduce you into looking at all 646 shots.

Another passion that figures prominently in her work is her love of peonies. She has created a DVD comprising thirty photographs of spectacular peonies she has grown. The lovely soundtrack features the calming classical guitar of Hollis Morgan playing Eric Satie's *Gymnopédie #1*. She has backed up her DVD of forty-five astounding photos of *Frost on Windows* with pianist Danna Cunningham's rendition of *Carol of the Bells*.

And that brings us to her passion for music. Street told me how Grammy Award winning guitarist and music producer Will Ackerman rekindled

her passion for photography and inspired her to grant herself permission to take a "photographic sabbatical" in 2007. After purchasing a new Ackerman CD, Janice sent him an email asking whether he would be giving any live concerts in Canada in the near future. One thing led to another, and Janice ended up organizing a house concert by Ackerman in West Carleton.

His reciprocal appreciation of her creative talents was just the impetus she needed to refocus on her fine art photography. She set aside her work as a graphic designer and concentrated her efforts on what she adores — creating images that evoke the emotions she experiences as she takes them. By October of 2008 she was featured by CTV's Regional Contact. The link to the show is on her website, and I recommend it for a closer glimpse into the artistic impulses and achievements of this nature-inspired and naturally talented photographer.



"I Can't Keep Up with Myself"

This lament pops out of Street's mouth as I express astonishment when she starts telling me about her newest and very ambitious project. In the process of publishing *Frost on Windows*, she realized that she wanted to "dedicate this book to my Grandfather, John E. Martin, whose poem became a part of me at a young age and opened my eyes and heart to nature's beauty..." Titled *Blue Sea Lake*, Martin's poem is an ode to the lake where he spent his summers, in the heart of the Gatineau Hills. He considered it "nature's masterpiece" and, although he wrote it thirteen years before Janice's birth, her mother recited it to her until "the spirit of his poem began to grow in me, and I started to look and see and feel with all my senses." This is the gift Street strives to give through her photography.



ARTIST • TRADING • CARD •

Her new project is to create a tribute to Blue Sea Lake. She has started videotaping interviews with the long-time residents of the area, and she is doing research into the history and legends of this important connection to her own past. The lake is credited with curative powers, and rumours of a Loch Ness type monster persist. She would love to hear from you if you or someone you know can add to her compilation of stories and data about Blue Sea Lake. Oh yes, she is also contemplating a children's book about *The Tree Frog Who Came for a Visit*.

Other Facets

Janice is the middle sister among three horse women. She has owned a horse for most of her life, and has recently acquired a new colt and a new puppy. She named her colt Bentley, in a wry allusion to a very classy car. Her connection to her animals is as apparent as her love of nature is in her photography, and her adorable new puppy accompanies her wherever she goes.

Street originally studied graphic design and commercial art at Algonquin College. Today she piggybacks off her experience as an art director and offers beginner and intermediate workshops in photography and Photoshop. Unlike many long-time photographers, Janice embraces digital technology wholeheartedly. "I love it. Digital frees you up so you can concentrate on your art and discover who you are as an artist." She takes a stress-free low-tech approach to her courses, so you may want to click on "Workshops" at

<janicestreet.ca> when you receive that wonderful new camera this Christmas.

After her appearance at the Christmas Show on December 4 at the Ottawa Farmers' Market, Janice will be signing copies of her new book on December 10 at Collected Works Bookstore and Café in Ottawa. The very next day she is hosting a House Show with wine and cheese from 1 to 4PM in Woodlawn, just past Dunrobin. She invites you to email <janice@janicestreet.ca> or call her (292-9623) for directions. On March 24 and 25, she will be at Studio 10 for the 10th annual Pakenham Maple Run Studio Tour. You can check her website for additional information.

Be sure to watch for her stunning new book, *Frost on Windows*, and gift cards, as you visit area bookstores. Her work is regularly on display at the Orange Art Gallery, near the Parkdale Market. You can purchase DVDs, screensavers and calendars at her website, and you can always contact her directly to purchase a lovely gift of magical photographic art.



SHOP LOCAL



Shopping locally is an investment in the future by stimulating the local economy and preserving the quality of life.

Supporting local producers has always been a priority at Foodsmiths. Local businesses can quickly identify the diversity of their customers' needs and are able to respond to requests for specific products more efficiently. Supporting local producers and businesses not only provides support for the jobs they offer, but also helps reduce the environmental impact on the community. Local residents play a vital role in helping independent business owners survive and Foodsmiths is grateful for 35 years of amazing local support. May your Holidays be filled with peace and happiness for 2012.

www.foodsmiths.com



Proud to be Celebrating



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A healthy part of your life for over 35 years

in Your Community

106 Wilson St. West Perth, ON
613.267.5409 1.877.366.3437

WHO Janice Street

WHAT Photographer, Graphic Artist

WHERE Woodlawn, <janicestreet.ca>, <janice@janicestreet.ca>, 292-9623

WHEN Sun. Dec. 4, 9AM-3PM. Ottawa Farmers' Market Christmas Market, Lansdowne, Aberdeen Pavilion; Sun. Dec. 11, 1-4PM. House Show, Kilmaurs Rd. Woodlawn, call 292-9623 for directions; Mar. 24-25, Pakenham Maple Run Studio Tour <maplerun.on.ca>.

WHY "My goal is to capture the emotion I feel as I am taking the photograph... I will spend my life enjoying this journey."

ARTIST TRADING CARD

A Christmas Celebration at the Mill of Kintail

Do you hear it? Sounds like a jingle. It's coming closer... a bit louder. It's horses and a sleigh! Wait — there's more... the jig of a fiddle, the crunch of the snow, the smell of cookies, the roar of the fire. Could it be? Yes! It's Christmastime at the Mill of Kintail.

Step into the world of holidays past at **Kintail Country Christmas** on Saturday, December 10. Experience the simpler side of the season with music, laughter, and the great outdoors. Take a stroll, or sleigh ride; strap on your blades and go for a spin around the rink. Enjoy stories by the fire and a Children's Only Gift Shop, complete with wrapping elves. There's hot apple cider and home baking too. A demonstration of hand hewn log bench making is new this year.

Hosted by Mississippi Valley Conservation at the Mill of Kintail Conservation Area, the event has something for every age. "This is our fifth Kintail Country Christmas and it keeps getting better," says museum curator Stephanie Kolsters.

"It's become a tradition for many; visitors come to the Mill of Kintail then head off to get their Christmas trees or have dinner in town. It's nice to think that we've helped create traditions and memories for families," she adds.

Kintail Country Christmas is truly a community event, with a wonderful group of supporters: Foodies Fine Foods, the Mill of Kintail Museum Committee, Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists, Mississippi Mills' museums, Ramsay Women's Institute, Metroland Media, and many other volunteers.

Father Christmas will also be visiting the Mill of Kintail. He invites everyone to come and see him in the museum gallery — each family receives a free photograph.

"Family and friends are what this magical season is all about. We invite you to enjoy all the traditions of the holiday season and spend time with your loved ones, surrounded by the beauty of the conservation area," says Kolsters.

The festivities run from 10AM to 4PM on Saturday, December 10. Admission is only \$15 per vehicle. Visit <mvc.on.ca> for a detailed schedule of events and site map.



This year's Kintail Country Christmas takes place on Saturday, December 10 from 10-4

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

Thinking of heading South this winter?

See us for all southern destinations...

Including Botswana!

ALMONTE TRAVEL

72 Mill Street, Almonte TEL» 613 256 4058
FAX» 613 256 4595
E-MAIL» info@almontetravel.ca

Gifts for Food Lovers

Fine Chocolate by Ludwig, Read's Book Shop.....	\$5-15
Gourmet Gift Baskets, Foodsmiths.....	\$21.95 & up
Maple Curry Spice, Fulton's.....	\$7.99
Saffire Grill & Smoker, Assembled, Rideau Valley Hearth & Home.....	\$114.9
Tishbi Fig Cabernet Preserve, Ground Waves.....	\$8.99

Gifts for Chocolate Lovers

Fair Trade Galerie au Chocolate Gift Box, Foodsmiths.....	\$11.99
Flourless Chocolate Torte, Foodies Fine Foods.....	\$18-25
Saxon Chocolate Truffle Table Cracker, Keepsakes.....	\$12.95

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The *GET IT HERE* card, at only \$20, gives you a year of rewards at participating businesses in Almonte & Pakenham.

- * Give it as a gift!
- * Use it to save money while shopping!

www.get-it-here.ca



Shop Small or Go Home

With the holidays in mind, I recently asked some Facebook friends why they liked shopping at small independent shops, and I got some interesting responses.

Janet wrote: "Because unlike with faceless corporations, one can build relationships with the proprietors of indie shops. It builds community — and gives us a chance to network with real local folks who have an interest in the life of the neighbourhood."

by John Pigeau

This comment reminded me of a lot of friendly shop owners in Perth, with whom I've become quite friendly over the last two years: Martin at **The Merchant On Herriott**; Barbara, Charlie and Tina at **The Bookworm**; Jude, Charlie and Karen at **Ground Waves**; Marguerite at **Art & Class**; the neighbourly ladies at **Dragon Moon**; and Angie at **Shadowfax**; just to name a few.

On a similar note, my friend Kate wrote: "Because, when shopping in small indie shops, one feels special, a part of something elemental."

I couldn't agree with her more. When I bought the shirt and tie for my wedding in August, the good folks at **Shaw's of Perth** made me feel special, as did a very kind gentleman at **Conway's Men's Wear** who stretched my Homburg hat for me so it fit just right.

Stewart, a wonderfully talented Toronto artist friend of mine, said he liked going to indie shops "because you can't tell who works there... but yet, you can." Stewart is a funny guy, but I know what he means. Many people have come into the shop my lovely wife (Erin) and I run (**Backbeat Books, Music & Gifts**), and said to me, "Excuse me. Do you work here?"

This always brings a smile to face. I mean, I can't blame them: a guy in faded jeans, a well-worn cap and a leather jacket could easily be mistaken for a customer rather than a shopkeeper. But to me, and I believe this is Stewart's point, the feel of a small indie shop is a casual one in which the customer and owner can immediately become comfortable with one another — without any stuffiness or upselling.

Two other friends of mine pointed out the importance of shopping local. Randy wrote: "I like shopping at indie shops because I know more of the money I spend is staying in the community. I also find small shop owners more responsive if I am looking for something hard to find or unusual. It's nice to know that by supporting the 'little guy' we are encouraging entrepreneurship and creativity."

Gillian pretty much echoed those sentiments. She said she likes to shop small "because you can find unique things there... that big boxes don't carry. Because it's great to walk down a place's streets and see who it really is, instead of feeling like you're in Everywhereville."

I don't wish to slag box stores, but I believe my friend Amanda also made a good point when she commented: "... because I can usually walk to them and walk from store to store, unlike big box stores which are temples to cars and SUVs."

All of these comments are bliss to small shopkeepers' ears, I can tell you that. And it has nothing to do with greed. When you know that people want to support your store because they think it's charming and "just the thing the town needed," well, that brings a joyful feeling. Sure, it's also a great thing to know you can pay the rent for the long winter months and pop your head up come spring, no matter what business you're in.

As for me, I am happy knowing I will be able to do all of my holiday gift shopping on three streets in Perth. Four downtown blocks and I'll be in and out of the possibly blustery (no, thank you!) conditions in no time.

Speaking of which, I was just out for my afternoon walk on the slushy November streets and chanced to stop by

Jo's Clothes, owned by the lovely Joanna McAuley. One look around her shop and I thought: "If I can't find something for my sister, mother, or wife in this colourful boutique, well, I must be sleeping."

When I was there, another gift idea pretty much leapt out at me: concert tickets! **Tickets Please**, which is located in Jo's Clothing and run by the charming (and informative!) Ann Hawthorne, is a gift giver's dream for that hard-to-buy-for loved one. If there is something happening in Perth — a concert, play, book reading, choir performance, studio tour, house tour, puppet show — chances are you can get your tickets at Tickets Please. Also, Ann just told me Tommy Hunter is coming to Perth in March. Yep. *The* Tommy Hunter. See? That's the sort of inside scoop you get at indie shops! And we could all use that, no matter the time of year.

— John Pigeau and his lovely wife, Erin Daley, would like to wish you, your family and friends a very healthy and happy holiday season.

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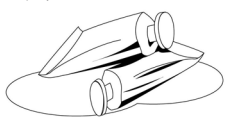
Gordon J. Weber, (BFA, AOCA, 30 yrs. commercial and fine art), welcomes all levels to his Merrickville studio for the basics of appreciating and creating art by drawing and painting. Topics: composition, colour, perspective, the value of values, materials and techniques.

Watercolour: 10 Classes, Jan. 5 to Mar. 8, 7-10PM

Oil/Acrylics: 10 Classes, Jan. 7 to Mar. 10, 10:30-1:30PM

Max. 8 students / class; each session, \$200.

To register, inquire, or purchase
Christmas gift certificate call
Gordon, (613) 269-2964.



Holiday Happenings in Burnstown

The wee village of Burnstown is getting into the spirit of Christmas this year and showing its support for an Arnprior area initiative to raise awareness of that town's Partners in Caring foundation.

Some Burnstown private homes, shops and eateries have chosen to deck themselves out in a Scottish theme to participate in the foundation's Christmas decorating contest, all the while supporting a good cause.

According to foundation chair Ted Kelly, the purpose of the contest is two-fold: to put the foundation at the forefront of people's minds and to foster holiday spirit. Participating businesses include: Neat Coffee Shop, The Blackbird Café, Somethin' Special Gifts, The Artist's Cove, and Bittersweet Gallery.

One of Burnstown's heritage log homes (the O'Connor Hotel during the logging days and, in the more recent past, Beyond the Bulrushes) will also be opening its doors to one and all. The house will be fully decorated for your viewing pleasure and, while no tickets are being sold for the tour, a donation will be requested in support of two very worthwhile causes: the local Salvation Army and, a cause close to the homeowners' hearts, an orphanage in Kenya called "Hosanna".

Very recently, two energetic, caring and extremely generous young people (who happen to be

the niece and nephew of the house's owners) established a foundation called "Hearts for Change" in support of this orphanage, which is currently home to close to seventy children aged from under five years to mid-teens. The beauty of this foundation is that all donations go directly to the children — no money is filtered off for administration fees or advertising. In fact, this young humanitarian couple cover more than 75% of the monthly costs out of their own earnings, and fundraising efforts. Visit <heartsforchange.ca> to learn more about the Hosanna orphanage and how you can make a difference! For more information call 433-9549.

Aside from touring this beautiful home, there will be seasonal items for sale (proceeds go to the cause) and you will be treated to live music and seasonal treats!

On Friday, December 9, the participating merchants of Burnstown will extend their hours to 9PM, hosting an open house throughout the weekend and offering seasonal refreshments and door prizes.

In the meantime, decorative evergreen clusters will be for sale at Bittersweet Gallery, Somethin' Special and the Artist's Cove, with proceeds going to the Salvation Army and Hearts for Change. For more information, call 432-5254 or 752-1464.

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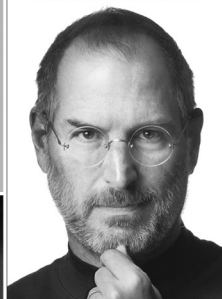
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From Teat to Table...

Local Couple Makes Cheese for Ewe

How has *your* life unfolded? I find it interesting to hear how people's lives twist and turn through time, or cut straight through it like a dart. Some seem to have an inkling from the time they are watching, say, *The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau*, that marine

by Susie Osler

biology will become their life's work. Others dabble a bit here, and then a bit there, sometimes finding their groove, and sometimes not.

Kyle White and Caitlin Hynes Dobson might fall into the former category. Kind of. Though they may not be old enough to know who Jacques Cousteau was, the point is that at ages 24 and 27, and with the generous assistance of about thirty sheep, these new farmers are well on their way to establishing a great, small, farm-based business for themselves with a clarity of vision that I find rare in people their age. Their thing is cheese. Raw ewe's milk cheese. It is delicious. They are part of a farming renaissance that is finding its legs (and support) amidst the floundering and failing of the industrial food system.

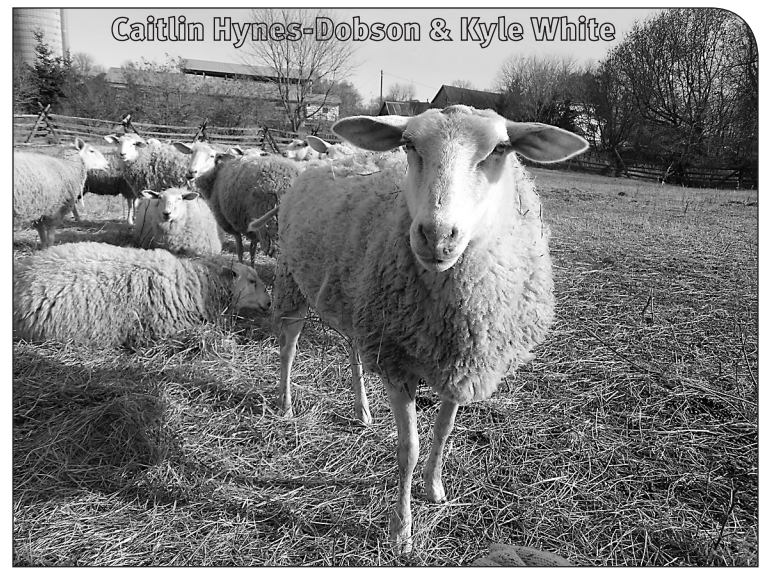
Yet if you had asked these two what they imagined they'd be doing several years ago, cheese would not have even been on the radar. Only a year and a half after Caitlin's graduation with a B.Sc. from Queens (2010), and with Kyle only a few years out of the gate himself (B.Sc. University of Ottawa 2007), they have taken an unexpected seed of an idea (cheese making), done enormous

amounts of research on sheep husbandry and cheese making, bought animals, planned, permitted, and built infrastructure, applied (and received) multiple grants from agencies such as NFU's New Farm Project <newfarmproject.ca/passing-on-the-gift>, OMAFRA, and Valley Heartland, lambled their first batch of lambs, figured out rotational pasturing and how to care for sheep organically, and experimented with batches of cheese that are just now, after a two-month aging process, beginning to ripen. What these two have is an amazing ability to commit to a plan, to focus, to think systematically, and work methodically; the foresight to build infrastructure from the get-go that that will serve them well as the business

able to start out on the farm that Caitlin grew up on near Smiths Falls. It's a gorgeous century stone farmhouse with barns and out-buildings to die for. In fact, if I were a sheep, I would like to live there! The couple has built their sheep and dairy infrastructure so it can (with any luck) be moved when they are able to buy their own farm (another example of excellent foresight). Other invaluable help has come in the form of mentors — namely Richard Garner, who previously made artisanal sheep's cheeses (Brebis sur le toit bleu) and who has helped them enormously in transferring his knowledge, skills and also several pieces of essential equipment.

Even though they both grew up in the country, neither one grew up farming per se. Having said that, Caitlin's Dobson ancestors have been homesteading/farming in the Ottawa Valley since the early 1800s, and her father Bill now raises cows after a life in the antiques business, so farming is quite clearly in her blood. But the desire to enter the world of artisanal cheese making was not something anyone might have expected from them. Caitlin told me she knew *nothing* about cheeses. Their friends from University were a bit skeptical at first. "You're going to farm?" "You're raising *sheep* for cheese?" What about those years of slogging away for

the degrees? Yet the decision to make cheese and to raise the sheep that produce the milk for it was quite logical. They wanted to live in the country, be self-employed, be able to eventually support a family, and make use of their skills. They also wanted to make use of the whole animal — wool and meat included. Their lab and bio-chemistry training set them up in ways that perhaps their professors (or they themselves) might not have anticipated — they gained certain transferable skills like meticulous observation (of both animals and the stages of the cheese process), the ability to research and write (see their excellent blog listed



Who They Are

Caitlin Hynes-Dobson & Kyle White
1112 Matheson Dr. Smiths Falls, ON, K7A 5B8
283-5270 <www.sheepdairy.blogspot.com>

What They Offer

Handcrafted raw sheep's milk cheeses (available next summer),
pastured lamb, natural wool products (2- and 3-ply yarn)



above), copious and consistent record keeping, using microscopes (for fecal samples to estimate parasite loads), and simply the understanding of chemistry that's involved in turning a batch of milk into delicious cheese.

Speaking of cheese... I was tickled to be one of the first to taste from the first wheel of cheese that they've made. The type of cheese is related to a "Tomme" — a French cheese typically made with cow's milk. It is a semi-hard cheese with a stiff washed rind (which one eats), and a rich, slightly salty flavour that becomes more enhanced as it continues to age. Raw milk cheese is a living organism, and the beneficial bacterial cultures and molds that work to turn milk into a particular cheese *keep on* working, so the cheese also changes over time. Regulations governing the productions of dairy products in Canada are a bit of a quagmire, especially when it comes to raw milk. In Ontario, raw milk cheeses must be aged for at least sixty days, which means that producers will, by necessity, be making harder cheeses that require that length of aging time (as opposed to softer, younger cheeses that would be prone to spoiling at sixty days).

It takes about 3.5 gallons of milk to make a wheel of their cheese. They have ten wheels in their aging cave at this point —

the results of the first milking season's experiments. They have the capacity to scale that up to about 300 wheels in a few years' time, and with about double the milking ewes. As on any farm, there are natural cycles that their business relies upon — in this case the reproductive cycle of sheep (British Milk Sheep, known for their high milk yields and hardiness) is central. It has taken a full year and a half of concerted effort for them to begin tasting the fruits of their efforts. After purchasing ten ewes and a ram in the summer of 2010, they bred for spring lambing. About five weeks later lambs are weaned and the ewes can be milked again. And thus begins the cheese-making cycle: from teat to the table — a milk transformation that takes over two months. Patience and meticulous control over every stage of the process pays off in good cheese. Caitlin and Kyle live by some advice given them: "make a really good cheese before you start selling it, rather than selling a mediocre cheese". Once their Tomme is firmly under their belt they plan to get to work on a feta.

Meanwhile, get ready to taste some great cheese — available, they expect, at farm-gate and maybe the Perth Farmers' Market (if we're lucky) next summer. Wool is also available in time for this Christmas from the farm, and lamb orders are being taken for next year.

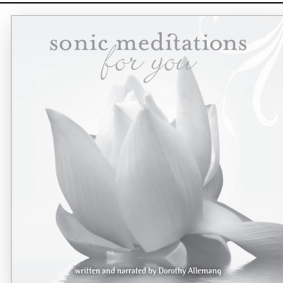
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**MERRY CHRISTMAS
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THE LOVELY LADIES AT PALMS!**

Leonard Dolgoy, 1926—2011

On November 22, very soon after moving from Almonte to Etobicoke, Leonard Dolgoy passed away following a brief illness. Leonard and his wife Reva were staunch supporters of all things artistic in this area: they befriended and mentored artists, initiated events, volunteered for countless organizations and groups, and created both works of art and an artistic milieu that encouraged others to flourish. From Leonard's artist profile back in 2001 to a tribute to the couple on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary, their names have graced our pages — as their numerous accomplishments have added to the humm of happenings throughout the Valley.

In memoriam, we would like to revisit a few of the words that have been written about Len (and Reva — they often acted in concert) over the years.

Leonard's Artist Profile, 2001

"Your Hummble arts reporter is always amazed at the patience and generosity of the artists we feature. Leonard was no exception; his experience as an educator really shone through as he explained the complex series of steps involved in creating his high fire reduction stoneware. Pottery is intrinsically tactile, and he obviously loves working in this pliable yet exacting medium. When I comment on his arthritic hands and complain about mine, he takes time out to show me the exercises he does to maintain strength and flexibility. In response to my endless questions, he provides a tutorial on the entire process."

— Sally Hansen

Mississippi Mills Cultural Achievement Award Winners, 2004

"Usefulness and Beauty. These are the words that define Reva and Leonard Dolgoy for me. To be sure, there are other terms that apply to them in abundance: kindness, social responsibility, community-mindedness, civic dutifulness. These remarkable people are the embodiment of Canadians who have committed their lives to political progress leavened with the forces of artistic expression for the many, who have rejected mere formalism and the construction of the arts as an elitist production in favour of an enlightened sharing for all citizens. In the words of Len and Reva, it all began with *mame loschen*, the mother tongue, in that precious and unique contribution of progressive Jewish Canadians dedicated to social justice, family love, and access to the arts for all."

— Patricia Whitney

"Soon after they moved to this area, Len became a respected member of the Ottawa Potters' Guild. Since their retirement, they have become known as passionate "art activists" and mentors. Some of the



local arts groups to which they, together or individually, have contributed are: ADAC/Performing Arts, Amaryllis (as founding members), Almonte & Area Artists Association, Mississippi Mills Community and Cultural Centre, Mississippi Mills Arts Council, Photography Matters, Student Selection Committee for the Noreen Young Bursary — the list goes on."

— Noreen Young

60th Wedding Anniversary, 2009

"Len and Reva Dolgoy shine among those who quietly make this a better community. They have consistently put their time, money and energy behind the projects and people they believe will make this a more sustainable, progressive, and culturally rich place to live. They are respected elders whose opinions on issues are always worth listening to. Besides all that, they are fun, make great pots and are a pleasure to be around. I'm grateful for their efforts and their presence."

— Stephen Brathwaite

A Final Word, 2011

"It is with great sadness and thankfulness that I write this note. Sadness at the loss of a dear friend, mentor, fellow artist, and honorary grandfather; thankfulness that he was and always will be a part of our lives. The world is a bit lonelier with the passing of Len Dolgoy, but also an immeasurably better place for his existence!"

— Adrianna and Dave Card

Gifts for Music Lovers

"Learn & Burn" by the Sheepdogs, Backbeat Books, Music & Gifts	\$17.95
Apartment Piano, Almonte Antique Market	\$695
Crystal Singing Bowls, Soul Scents	\$230-290
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Yoga Music to Stir the Soul, Yoga and Tea	\$20

Gifts for Gardeners

Cast Iron Dog Boot Scraper - Very Cute!, Rideau Valley Hearth & Home	\$55
Handmade Locally-Sourced Grapevine Wreaths, Tin Barn Market	\$12.99 & up

Have Yourself an Artful Little Christmas

Arnprior's Gifts of Light

On Saturday, December 3, from 10AM to 4PM, visit the elegant Kirkman House in Arnprior for the L'Arche "Gifts of Light" Christmas gift and bake sale, in celebration of the international day of persons with disabilities. You will find one-of-a-kind Christmas items, homemade baking and jams, and a variety of talented local vendors, all under one roof. The Kirkman House is located at 294 John Street in downtown Arnprior.

by Miss Cellaneous

L'Arche Arnprior is a community within the larger L'Arche non-profit organization <larche.ca>, in which people who have developmental disabilities and those who come to assist, share life and daytime activities together, in family-like settings that are integrated into local neighbourhoods. A portion of the proceeds from the Gifts of Light sale will be donated to L'Arche Arnprior.

Kanata Art Club

Kanata Art Club's 26th annual juried Art Show and Sale, featuring work by local artists from Kanata, Arnprior, Stittsville, Renfrew and environs, is being held from January 11 to 29 at the Kanata Civic Art Gallery. The gallery is located in the Mlacak Centre at 2500 Campeau Drive. Hours are Wednesday to Friday, 1 to 8PM; Sat-

urdays, 10AM to 5PM; Sundays, 1 to 5PM. Why not join them for the vernissage on Thursday, January 12 from 6:30 to 8PM.

The Life Fantastic at Gallery Perth

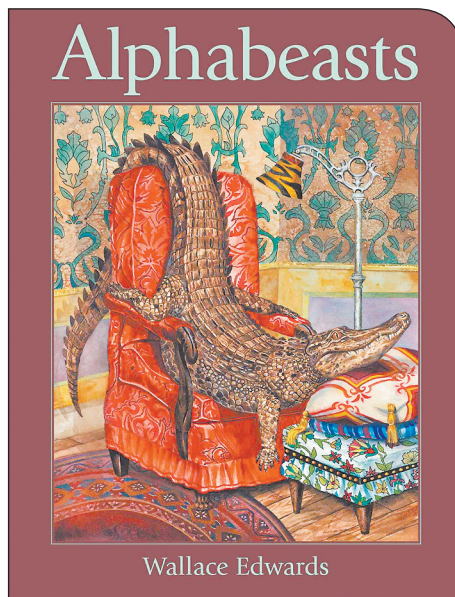
With the grey days of winter looming, Gallery Perth has brought together the work of six well-known artists with a focus on fun, colour and humour. Their work will be on display from December 10 through January 15.

Meet the artists at a vernissage on Saturday, December 10, from 2 to 5PM at the Gallery in Code's Mill, 17 Wilson Street East in Perth. Participating artists include Wallace Edwards, Donna Lynd, Joyce Devlin, Lorraine English, Carol Lee Riley and Monika Seidenbush. For more information, please call 264-8338 or visit <galleryperth.com>.

Westport Area Studio Tours Call For Artists

The organizers for the two Westport studio tours — Dandelion Gardens (May 2012 long weekend) and Fall Colours (Thanksgiving weekend October 2012) — are now accepting applications from artists and studios.

Artists interested in becoming a member studio or guest artist are invited to apply by printing and filling out the application on the website <artatwork.ca/westport_studiotours> and presenting their portfolio. The committee will contact you after the jurying is complete. Member studios must be within 15km



Wallace Edwards

Wallace Edwards, whose *Alphabeasts* won the Governor General's Award for illustration of children's books, is one of the artists participating in "The Life Fantastic" at Gallery Perth. On December 10, Wallace will sign his books at Ground Waves in Code's Mill at 1PM and then attend the vernissage at Gallery Perth at 2PM.

of the village of Westport — guest artists may apply from any area and will be juried and accepted if a host studio is available.

Jurying will take place mid-January, so applications must be received by January 15. Please visit the website or contact Loretta at <hookedonthelake@kingston.net> or 273-8347 for more information.

Call for Artists Submissions

The Smiths Falls and District Arts and Culture Council is inviting artist/artisan submissions for the first annual studio tour — **Smiths Falls Art Journey** — to be held June 16 and 17, within the Town of Smiths Falls.

Artists and artisans of every medium are welcome, including those emerging and established. Whether your interest is carving, jewellery, pottery, glass, sculpture or some other artistic form, we want you to participate!

If your location is outside the town and you wish to be a guest, the council will assist in providing a suitable location for you to display your artwork. This would mean that you will provide your own booth or tent and we will find a venue for you with access to bathroom facilities. You will be in control of your own sales and how you set up your own booth or tent.

If you already have a contact within the town who is willing to host your display at their location, then both parties would benefit through the advertising in the brochures, which will have a listing of the artist locations.

If you are interested in being considered, please submit your portfolio by Wednesday, December 9. Please do not send original artwork with this application. Download an application form from <smithsfallsarts.com/artjourney> or call 283-6000 for more information. Artists and artisans will be selected by jury. Successful candidates will be contacted.

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“Prelude to Christmas”

The **Central Band of the Canadian Forces** will be doing their part for the environment by performing their 13th benefit concert on Wednesday, December 7, with proceeds going to the Rideau Environmental Action League (REAL). “Prelude to Christmas” will take place in the cafetorium of the Smiths Falls and District Collegiate Institute beginning at 7PM.

This musical evening is a highlight of the Christmas season, and brings world class entertainment right to Smiths Falls. “Each and every year, I have thoroughly enjoyed it... Hearing a big brass band really is special. It warms the heart and makes you proud to be Canadian,” commented one concert enthusiast.

The Central Band of the Canadian Forces is one of six full-time military bands in Canada. Based in Ottawa, the Central Band takes their stirring performances to concerts, parades and festivals around the world, acting as musical ambassadors for Canada.

“We are delighted that the band has included us in their concert schedule. Their performances are truly impressive, and include something for all ages,” commented Barb Hicks, REAL president.

Conducted by Captain Peter Archibald, Commanding Officer and Director of Music, the concert includes a diverse selection of seasonal favourites, vocalists and soloists, and frequently includes a tribute to veterans and guest bagpipers. Local Jack FM radio personality Wayne Cavanaugh is the

Master of Ceremonies and will bring his unique brand of commentary to the evening.

Concertgoers will also be able to purchase a raffle ticket for a photo of a well-known Smiths Falls landmark. Simon Lunn, a local naturalist, photographer and REAL member, has contributed a captivating photo of the Northern Lights over the Bascule Bridge. Also included in the raffle is a chance to win a House Wine Kit donated by The Rideau Winery. Door prizes will be awarded as well.

This musical evening is the year's major fundraiser for REAL, a local, non-profit environmental organization serving Lanark, Leeds and Grenville. “Residents want to make an environmental difference, and we try to give them the information and opportunities to take action locally,” Hicks explained. Their projects include the ecoENERGY home retrofit, the Well Aware program, Evergreen Avenue, Pitch In Smiths Falls, and workshops, to name a few. REAL also operates the REAL Deal Reuse Store in Smiths Falls, where they sell gently used household and renovation materials that might otherwise end up in landfill.

Tickets for the concert are \$10 each and are available in Smiths Falls at the Kiosk in County Fair Mall, Modern Thymes on Russell Street, and the REAL Deal store, as well as at the Perth branch of The Royal Canadian Legion. For more information, please call 283-9819 or see <REALaction.ca>.

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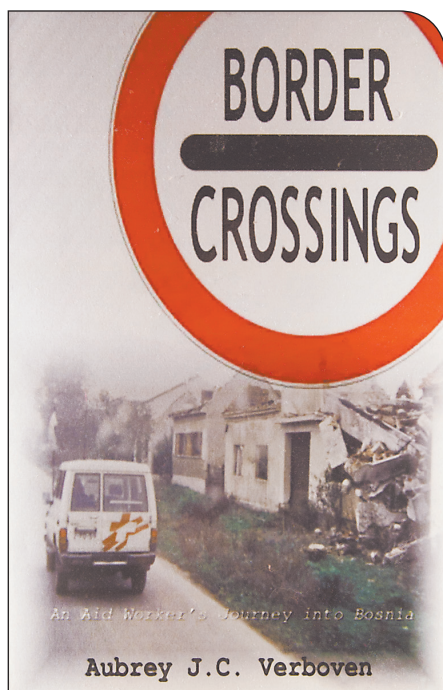
Crossing Borders

It's 1994, and the world beyond Justin's scope is crumbling. Daily images of genocide in Africa and ethnic cleansing in Eastern Europe assault his conscience. Fresh out of university, Justin's tame Toronto life is suffocating him. Fuelled by restlessness and disgust, Justin begins a journey that takes him across borders caused by ignorance and indignity. When he is hired by an aid group to deliver medical supplies in war-torn Croatia and Bosnia, Justin is faced with obstacles and the tangled bureaucracy of war. Clusters of frustrated Croatian refugees block all main roads so that no aid can reach their former Serb oppressors. Thousands of Bosnian Muslim refugees who blindly follow an enigmatic warlord also obstruct assistance destined for their enemies inside the Bihac Pocket. When the already violent but forgotten Bihac Pocket erupts in full-scale war, Justin's deliveries become more critical than ever to the sick and wounded. As Muslim forces within the Pocket fight each other, surrounding Serb forces attempt to crush their trapped Muslim enemies once and for all. If Justin is to help anyone, he must find a way to overcome duplicity, ethnic hatred, and his own fears.

Border Crossings — An Aid Worker's Journey Into Bosnia uses the oft-overlooked perspective of an aid worker to present a meticulous record of a forgotten corner of the Bosnian War. It is also the chronicle of a young man's journey to examine the content of his own character and that of those he has come to help.

Local writer Aubrey Verboven has just published this book, based on his experiences working with Médecins Sans Frontières during the war in Bosnia. *Border Crossings* offers an intimate view of life and work while under siege. Aubrey spent most of the 1990s living and traveling in Eastern Europe with his wife. During that time, he worked for various aid groups and international organizations including Médecins Sans Frontières, CARE Canada, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the International Organization for Migration. He also contributed a number of travel articles to publications such as the *Guardian Weekly*, *Globe & Mail* and *Central Europe Online*.

Border Crossings is now available at Mill Street Books in Almonte, and through Amazon in print and e-book.



Gifts for Readers

"100 Days That Changed Canada", Mill Street Books.....	\$45
"Phishing For Birds", Gilligalou Bird Inc.	\$20.95
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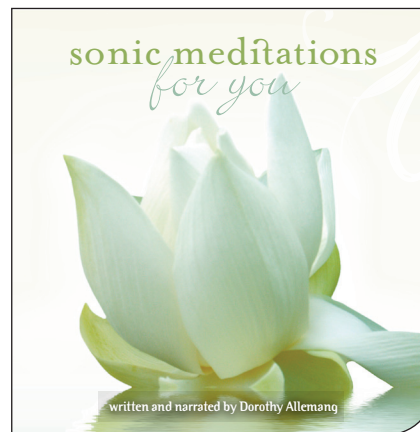
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Dorothy Allemang lives in the Arnprior area, and for the past two decades has been teaching energy healing and meditation as well as providing healing alignment sessions to clients from all over. She recently created *Sonic Meditations For You* — a CD consisting of four guided meditations that she wrote and narrated, along with music by Johannes Welsch from Dunrobin Sonic Gym.

The meditations include *Crystal Heart* (taking you into your heart to resonate with yourself), *Simply Relaxing* (a head-to-toe guided relaxation), *Grove Of Wisdom* (a walk in the forest gaining wisdom from the trees), and *Healing With Light* (visualization using white light to heal the entire body). Inspired by family, friends, students and clients, Dorothy's soothing voice and the sounds of crystal bowls and gongs enhance the deep blissful relaxation and meditative state, melting away stress and leaving you feeling rejuvenated and alive.



Numerous studies show the health benefits meditation has on our body and mind. People who meditate tend to be happier and healthier. Meditation also affects the entire nervous system in a positive way. It decreases high blood pressure, lowers cholesterol levels, reduces chronic pain and anxiety, and much more.

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It's Christmas Concert Time!

Country Christmas Concert at Maberly Hall

The Tay Valley Community Choir will once again create a cozy, warm, relaxed atmosphere at their annual Country Christmas Concert on December 3 at the Maberly Hall. Audience members return again and again to experience the "old timey" country feeling that fills the hall each Christmas season.

Last year's hilarious hit, *Fruitcake*, makes its return, while *Jingle Bells Through the Ages* is a new piece destined to become a favourite. Traditional and newer Christmas songs round out the repertoire for the evening. With directors Ann McMahon and Grace Armstrong, the choir has a lot of fun while creating a warm, joyful and beautiful sound together.

Joining the choir are several special guests who have shared the stage with the choir before — why argue with success?! Mississippi Windsong, a piano/flute/clarinet trio, had the audience entranced at the spring concert.

The Glen Tay Girls Group, from Glen Tay School, was totally charming. Beryl Stott returns with her soaring heavenly flute as she accompanies the choir.

The concert will be held at the Maberly Hall on Saturday, December 3 at 7:30PM. Admission is by donation at the door, and food bank donations are also welcome. Refreshments will be served following the concert as the audience and artists mingle to share the celebration of community and the season.

Messiah in Merrickville

On Sunday, December 4 at 2PM at Merrickville United Church, the North Grenville Concert Choir, accompanied by the Divertimento Orchestra of Ottawa, will offer their annual performance of Handel's *Messiah* as part of the weekend-long celebrations of "Christmas in Merrickville".

For many years, the choir has performed this beautiful music in Kemptville, Manotick and Winchester, so they are delighted to be able to share this traditional musical gift with the people of an extended area. This year, they are under the



Hear Handel's *Messiah* in Merrickville on December 4

direction of the experienced Gordon Slater, Orchestra music director since 1986. They are also privileged to have joining them, in the tenor section, their new choir director Paul Arnold. Guest soloists include Joan Fearnley, Carole Portelance, Brad Bergen and Norman E. Brown.

As seating is limited, it is recommended that you reserve or purchase your tickets in advance. For reservations, call Merrickville United Church at 269-4414 and leave a message, or to purchase in advance, drop in at Miller's of Merrickville Country Store, COBA Studios in Larkspur Lane or the Knock Knock Shoppe in Merrickville. If you are unable to attend at this show, look for performances in Brockville at 1st Presbyterian Church on Saturday, December 3 at 7:30PM. or in Kemptville at St James Anglican Church (call 258-9978) on December 4 at 7:30PM. Don't miss the opportunity to enjoy this treasured Christmas musical offering.

The Valley Voices

The Valley Voices, Almonte's community choir, invites you to their Christmas concert on Sunday, December 11 at 7PM at the Almonte United Church. Under the direction of Becky Schweizer, the selection of music is outstanding — beautiful songs to put you in the mood for winter

and for the Christmas season — songs such as *Baby It's Cold Outside*, Irving Berlin's Christmas medley, and a choir favourite *Did You Hear The Song*.

Invite a friend — invite several! You're guaranteed a highly enjoyable evening.

Tickets are available for \$7 at Baker Bob's or at the door. For information, call Amanda at 256-0134 or Fern 624-5104.

Perth Citizens' Band Christmas Concert

The Perth Citizens' Band, Canada's oldest continuing band, will be holding its annual Christmas concert on Tuesday, December 13, at 7:30PM. Come hear them in St. James Anglican Church, located at the corner of Drummond and Harvey Streets in Perth.

The concert continues the long tradition of Christmas concerts in that church, started by the band in the mid-1920s. The concert will feature a variety of popular and sacred Christmas music from over the years, and the audience is always in-

vited to sing along with their favourites. The guests this year will be Perth Town Crier Brent McLaren and local vocal group Oddities. Oddities has been performing in the Perth area for close to eighteen years, and the group is directed by Nicola Oddy and Jack Hurd.

Admission to the concert is \$5 per person and \$10 for families, with tickets available at the door. For details, see the Perth Citizens' Band's website <perthband.ca> or phone 256-4221.

Snack, Cider and Song

On Sunday, December 18 at 4PM at Holy Spirit Parish (1489 Shea Road in Stittsville), the Goulbourn Male Chorus of eighteen singers, under the direction of Robert Dueck, presents an old-fashioned Christmas concert. There will be an intermission with goodies and hot apple cider.

Guest performers include the Trinity Hilltop Ringers, St. Thomas Anglican Children's Choir, and the Yuletide Ladies Chorus. They will also participate in a massed choir selection along with the handbells. And warm up your vocal chords because the concert will include some audience carol sing-a-long with guest flautists.

From November 26 to December 15, adult tickets can be purchased for \$12 at Gaia Java Coffee Shop at 1300 Stittsville Main in the Stittsville Shopping Center — cash only, please. Tickets will also be available at the door: adults \$15 each, with free admission for 16 and under. Search "Goulbourn Male Chorus" in Facebook for more details.

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Celebrate the season with David Francey and friends at the Almonte Old Town Hall on December 11

Carols for a Christmas Eve

On December 11, David Francey returns to the Almonte Old Town Hall, where he and pianist Kathryn Briggs recorded his much-loved Christmas CD *Carols for a Christmas Eve*. As Greg Quill of the Toronto Star says, "*Carols for a Christmas Eve* (is) a soothing and heartwarming collection of traditional favourites."

David and Kathryn will be joined on stage by guitar master Terry Tufts to present a wonderful evening of Christmas music. The audience will be encouraged to sing along to both classic and more modern Christmas favourites, as well as a few original songs by all three artists.

Following a 48-date cross country tour for his latest CD, *Late Edition*, Francey is looking forward to a relaxed evening of carols, storytelling and fun with friends. This promises to be an excellent start

to the Christmas season. In a beautiful setting surrounded by the sounds of singing, a glorious Steinway concert grand piano, a guitar and laughter, along with baked treats and hot cider — lovely! There will also be a display of original art and prints by David and his wife, artist Beth Girdler.

David began his music career in 1999 at the age of 45. Within five years he'd won three Junos and began touring worldwide. He is established as one of today's finest singer-songwriters, filling concert halls nationally and internationally.

The concert is in Almonte's Old Town Hall, at 14 Bridge Street at 7PM on Sunday, December 11. Tickets are \$20 in advance, from Mill Street Books and Mississippi Mills Musicworks, and will be \$25 at the door. You can download *Carols for a Christmas Eve* and free printable lyrics at <davidfrancey.com>.

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Theatre News for the Holidays

First off, a big round of applause is due to the troupes and shows from our area who comported themselves so outstandingly in November's **Eastern Ontario Drama League One-Act Festival**. Despite strong competition from as far away as Peterborough, Belleville and Ottawa, our area brought home the lion's share of awards, including:

- the Peterborough Theatre Guild Adjudicator's Award for Ensemble Acting — *The Christmas Tree* (Studio Theatre Productions, Perth)
- the Penny Arril Award for Technical Merit — Valley Players, Almonte, for lighting and sound in *Those Who Can, Do*
- Peterborough Examiner's Award for Visual Production — *Mail Order Annie* (Studio Theatre Productions, Perth)
- the Mae Carmichael Award for Acting (Female) — Danielle MacDonald in *Mail Order Annie* (Studio Theatre Productions, Perth)

by Ian Doig

- Nepean Little Theatre Award for Acting (Female) — Ann Hartry in *This is a Play* (Theatre Night in Merrickville)

My enthusiastic congratulations to all of the winners, and to the troupes they so ably represented

And now to our amazingly active holiday season billboard; The **Perth Academy of Musical Theatre** proudly presents its Young Performers program for the upcoming season. The old favourite *Guys and Dolls* hits the stage on December 1, 2 and 3 at 7:30PM, followed by a newer favourite, *Glee!*, on December 9 and 10, also at 7:30PM. Both shows take place at PAMT's home stage, the Myriad Centre for the Arts in the Old Perth Shoe Factory on Sherbrooke Street. Tickets are \$10, reserved seating, at 267-9610 or at the door. For further information, please visit <myriadcentre.ca>.

The **Mississippi Mudds** will be performing their panto *Alice in Wonderland* at the Carleton Place Town Hall on Dec 2, 3, 9 and 10 at 7:30PM and December 4 and 10 at 2PM. For tickets, call Arts Carleton Place at 132 Coleman Street, 257-2031. Evenings are \$20 and matinees are \$15. For more information, visit <mississippimudds.ca>.

While up until now the world of the Christmas pantomime has belonged almost exclusively to the Mudds, this year the **Smiths Falls Community Theatre** steps into the ring with their production of *Cinderella* — incidentally, the first show I ever did, with the Mudds, many, many years ago! With a cast of more than thirty, this young peoples' delight is directed by Patricia Parry, who I'm sure was no stranger to pantos when she was a little girl! Show dates are December 8, 9, 10, 16, 17 at 7:30PM, with two Sunday matinees, December 11 and 18 at 2PM. Please note that there is reserved seating for this production, so be sure to purchase your tickets in advance. You can get them from the SFCT's new ticket outlet: Compositions Art Gallery, 47 Main Street East in Smiths Falls (205-1258).

Perth's **Barn Door Productions** is celebrating its first Christmas season in its new home — Full Circle Theatre, on Highway 43 (Craig Street) — with a reprise of their musical take on one of Charles Dickens' "other" Christmas tales. *The Chimes* has all of that Dickens passion, empathy and what can only be called "Christmas spirit", that we all know from *A Christmas Carol* — without Scrooge — but with a whole new cast of fascinating and endearing characters! Performances are December 9, 10, 15, 16, 17 at 8PM and December 11, 18 at 2PM only. Ticket reservations can be made by calling 267-1884 or going to <barndoorproductions.ca>.

Also in Perth, **Studio Theatre Productions** is offering up a Christmas double-header, comprising of *The Christmas Tree* by Norm Foster (directed by Jeremy Dutton) and *A Child's Christmas in Wales* by Dylan Thomas (directed by David Parry). Note that *The Christmas Tree* won the Peterborough Theatre Guild Adjudicator's Award for Ensemble Acting and Lucas Tennant was nominated for best male actor in the EODL Festival! Show dates are December 15, 16 and 17 at 8PM and December 18 at 2PM. Between BDP and STP this month, there should be little reason for anyone in or near Perth to suffer a lack of Christmas spirit this year!

And on the audition front, **The Kemptville Players** are looking for four men in the age range of 40 to 60, and four women about 25 to 50 years old for their April production of *Lafferty's Wake*, by Susan Turlish. I'm told that if you can sing in the shower or at a bar, you should come out and audition. It would also be advantageous, but not necessary, if one actor of each gender could strum a guitar, and a teacher is available. Sounds like fun! For further info please call 692-3414.

And lastly, let me wish each and every one of you — performers, techies, backstage and front-of-house people and, most importantly of course, all of you out there who make all the things we do possible, with your invaluable support and attendance — an absolutely splendid, happy, healthy and enjoyable holiday season!

The perfect time for a panto! Two local theatre troupes are presenting pantomimes in time for the holidays: the **Mississippi Mudds** (right) with *Alice in Wonderland*, and the **Smiths Falls Community Theatre** with *Cinderella*!



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So leave the hustle and bustle, line-ups and traffic behind, and let them help you check off your Christmas list with good cheer and a smile (and free parking to boot!).

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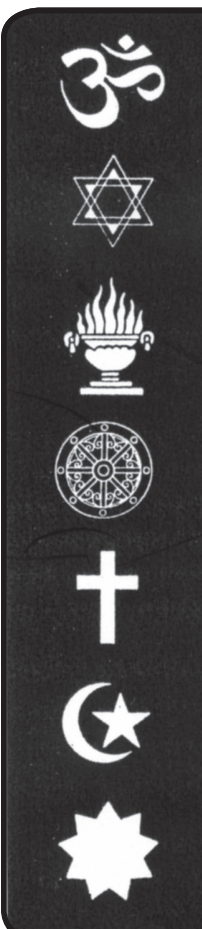
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Baha'u'llah.

Warm Christmas greetings from our hearts to yours - The Baha'is* in your neighbourhood.

(*Baha'is, members of God's most recent world-encompassing religion, wholeheartedly believe in Christ and His spiritual teachings.)

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Classics Under the Tree

Ottawa Valley's professional summer theatre company, the Classic Theatre Festival, has announced its 2012 summer season, to be held once again at the wheelchair-accessible, air-conditioned Mason Theatre (13 Victoria Street in Perth). And those who purchase special holiday vouchers before December 31 can save up to 20% off regular ticket prices while enjoying the freedom to pick their actual show dates later, closer to the performances.

Two for the Seesaw

The Festival's third season will kick off with William Gibson's landmark *Two for the Seesaw*, an unconventional comedic love story about two lost souls who find one another in the hustle and bustle of late 1950s New York City. Gibson (author of the much-loved Helen Keller story, *The Miracle Worker*) picked up a Tony Award for Best Play on Broadway with *Two for the Seesaw*, which marked the stage debut of Anne Bancroft and also starred Henry Fonda. In many ways, the show marked a significant moment on Broadway, when the razzle-dazzle of the 1950s gave way to a more mature understanding of human relations that, while vastly entertaining, was not without substance. *Two for the Seesaw* will run July 13 to August 5.

Mary, Mary

The season's second show is the uproarious Jean Kerr comedy *Mary, Mary* — the 8th longest running play in Broadway history. Kerr, who in the early 1960s embodied that rare combination — a

successful female Broadway playwright — was also the author of the best-selling take on raising kids in suburbia, *Please Don't Eat the Daisies*. *Mary, Mary* chronicles the comedic tribulations of a recently divorced couple who realize that a second chance might be worth taking. Like *Two for the Seesaw*, *Mary, Mary* deals with issues like divorce and the meaning of loving relationships, in a funny yet realistic manner, and will appeal to a broad audience. *Mary, Mary* runs August 10 to September 2.

All shows will be staged Wednesday to Saturday at 8PM, with 2PM matinées each Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. "We have a growing audience who love the era that we have chosen — the golden age of Broadway and the London Stage — and who keep coming back for more," says the Festival's artistic producer, Laurel Smith. "There's something truly special about plays of this era. Our audiences leave the theatre feeling good about themselves, and write to us to tell us of what a great experience they had. We bring some of Canada's top professional talent to Perth every summer, and we look forward to announcing our 2012 summer cast in the New Year."

Tickets for the 2012 season make a great gift, and you can save by buying early! Buy before January 1 and receive a discount of 10% for one play and 20% for purchasing both plays. The voucher can be redeemed next year when dates are ready to be confirmed. Order tickets online at <classictheatre.ca>, by phone at 1-877-283-1283, or in person at Tickets Please, 39 Foster Street in Perth.



Gifts for Wives

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Facial Rejuvenation Acupuncture, Hands On Healing Centre.....	\$145
Gift Certificate for 30-min Therapeutic Massage, Kim Narraway, RMT	\$46
Jewellery by Anne-Marie Chagnon, Pyrrha, etc. Bittersweet Gallery	\$50-400
Lamb Leather Handbags, Strévé Design	\$45-295
Lug Travel / Passport Wallet, Asst. Colours, Ground Waves.....	\$29.99
Shankari Silver & Semi-Precious Stone Jewellery, the White Lilly.....	\$150-1500
Sigrid Naturals Handmade Skin Care, Backbeat Books, Music & Gifts.....	\$24-48
Vintage Fur Stole, Vintage Wear / Ware	\$50
Wearable Glass Art by Lezlie Winemaker, Peace of Mind Creations.....	\$36-150



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Re-gifting: A Clause for Concern?

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

Dear Miss Write,

With the holidays upon us, I'm curious to hear your thoughts on re-gifting. Is it ever okay?
Thrifty in the Valley

by Emily Arbour

Dear Thrifty,

My thoughts on re-gifting are this. Totally cool. So long as a) you aren't re-gifting to the person who gave it to you in the first place, b) the recipient isn't a friend, relative or acquaintance of the person who gave it to you, c) there isn't an inch of dust on the thing, and d) it's appropriate. What I mean by that is, don't go giving your sister-in-law that precious Royal Doulton if she lives in a postage stamp of a rez room at U of T. It doesn't matter if something is valuable (I'm pretty confident the dust-collecting figurine ship sailed in the '90s

anyway) — if it's not even the slightest bit thoughtful or relevant to the recipient, it'll scream either "re-gift" or "frantically reclaimed from the yard sale bag."

Some of my best re-gift success stories include: giving my sister a stack of second-hand books I'd read and enjoyed, bundled in twine and topped with a heartfelt note about how I know we share a love of reading; giving an oversized mug (that I never did drink from, I'll have you know) stuffed with a few packets of hot chocolate (from my pantry) as a hostess gift; and giving a friend (who'd never seen me wear it) a funky piece of costume jewellery that was right up her alley. I once even gave my boss a CD after I'd downloaded it to my iPod. Now what is wrong with that I ask you?

The trick is putting a little effort into the packaging. Keep it simple and wrap it to the nines. Don't cop out and pop it in a gift bag. Those will do for the good gifts, but for the potentially stinky ones, there's nothing like a meticulously wrapped prezzie to mask the smell of disappointment.

One of the best tips I have, frankly, is to always have some quality wrap and ribbon at hand. Preferably matching. Also, a

box of pretty cards. Which, yes, you have to write something more than your name in.

Sincerely, *Miss Write*

Dear Miss Write,

Is it spelled "Claus"? Or "Clause"? Because my brother-in-law insists upon the addition of the "e" and I think he's dead wrong. Can you spare me from another Christmas dinner debate and set the record straight?

Yours, *Relatively Intelligent*

Dear Relatively,

Thank you for your question. You can go ahead and call your B-I-L right now and tell him to pick up a book for once because, unlike our Green Gables friend (someone's going to get this reference, I

just know it), it's "Claus" without the "e." According to UrbanDictionary.com, the definition of Santa Clause is "the incorrect spelling of Santa Claus, often used by the careless or the illiterate, possibly the result of learning to read from film titles. *The Santa Clause* is a film starring Tim Allen. (For the record, I knew the answer without checking.)

Happy Holidays! *Miss Write*

— *Emily Arbour is a freelance writer (among other things) who lives and works in Almonte, Ontario. By no means is she an expert in anything but having an opinion and making things up. You can go ahead and take her advice, but you'd probably do just as well asking your husband what his mother would like for Christmas. Only difference is he doesn't have a column in this fine publication.*

Gifts for Art Lovers

2012 Calendar , Nudes of Mississippi Mills.....	\$20
Art Class Gift Certificates , Almonte Antique Market.....	\$25-130
Art Registry or Gift Certificates , Gallery Perth.....	various
Original Art Work & Pottery , Palms... the Coffee Shop.....	\$25 & up
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Rod McIvor Photography from Philip Wood Framing , The Village Idiot.....	\$165

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An Event Not To Be Missed!

You pick the date. Could be an evening... Could be an entire day. And that is your Home Day. Now mark it off on your calendar. If anyone asks you to go out that night, "Thanks, but I'm observing **Home Day**." And no, they cannot join you.

Maybe you live alone, maybe with a significant other, maybe with an entire family. Whoever you live with, you are stuck with them for the night. And you spend

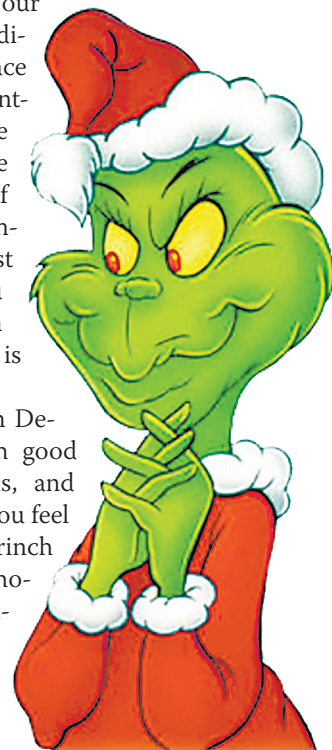
by Rona Fraser

the time together — not each with your own computer or TV. And you have fun together. Maybe with a board game, maybe Rock Band, maybe popcorn and a movie. You decide. But it is a commitment-free time. Chore-free too. Relax and enjoy your home and whoever shares it with you. Perhaps share a Christmas classic that reminds us that we all have a bigger impact on others' lives than we realize (*It's a Wonderful Life*) or that it's never too late to change for the better (*A Christmas Carol*, *Scrooged*) or that families can be nuts but still care for each other (*National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*). And let's not forget the best

cartoon ever made, in my personal opinion, *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*.

A lot of us take our homes and immediate family (or peace and quiet) for granted. Take some time to unplug from the rollercoaster of schedules and commitments and just enjoy what you have. Take a breath and smile. Life is good.

I wish you a fun December, filled with good food, good friends, and good music. May you feel the joy of the Grinch merrily playing who-who on his trumpet. And take care of yourselves!



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“Elf-Help” in Mississippi Mills!

It's finally December in Mississippi Mills!! My favourite time of year! (Not counting summer festival time, that is.)

December. When there is so much to do, between celebrating and preparing, that we wish time would slow down. Puppets don't need much sleep, but people, well, you need to plan accordingly. I will do my best to help you out. Please get your daytimer or open your calendar app on your whoosy-wotsit... I will wait.

by Miss Mills

OK. The first thing to do is to clear the weekend of December 2 to 4 of any other plans, because you don't wanna miss this. Friday the 2nd, at 7PM, everyone (yes, everyone) gathers in downtown Almonte for **Light Up The Night**. It is a magical experience: chat with friends and strangers, sip hot chocolate as you wander down Mill Street to the stage, where my pals Wayne Rostad and Leanne Cusack once again host a slew of guest entertainers, from musicians to puppets. See Santa's arrival, and catch your first glimpse of the helpful Almonte Elves. Many shops will be staying open late, offering a place to warm up. Multi-task by shopping a bit amidst the fun!

Get a good night's sleep because Saturday the 3rd at 1PM is the parade so good it goes round twice: the **Pakenham Santa Claus Parade**! Afterwards, meet Santa and his missus in the Stewart Community Centre, and warm up with two of my favourite hot things: hot chocolate and hot dogs! And they are free, along with the free skate (2 to 3PM).

Repeat the fun on Sunday with the **Almonte Santa Claus Parade** at 1:30PM. OK, this parade only goes around once, but to compensate for that, come on down to Mill Street at noon to enjoy some local **school bands**! They may even let you sing along. After the parade enjoy more of those “hot” treats with the Clauses, this time at Almonte's Community Centre.

Phew! What a weekend! I can hear some of you crying: “But Miss Mills, you don't understand... I have a ton of shopping to do... I can't just have fun!” Well that's why the friendly folk of Almonte and Pakenham are here! Not only can you get great personal (and knowledgeable!) service in their shops, but they are also putting on some special times and people to help you get the job done.

Young families: Here is a great plan for Thursday, December 8. Drop kids at **Blackbird** for a **Kids-Only Shopping Night**. It's from 5 to 9PM but your kids will likely only need about 15 minutes. While waiting, get a coffee from **Palms** — I hear there may even be live music! Once the kids are done, dad can take them shopping for mom, as several shops are open late that night. Extra dad tip: Heritage Mall has public washrooms for those kid emergencies. And moms? The gleesome threesome: **Kentfield Kids**, **Tin Barn Market**, and **doree's habit**, all under one roof, are having a **Ladies' Night** from 7 to 10PM, with refreshments, live music, and

a special gift for the first 25 of you. **Just Casual** across the street is also staying open with up to 20% off, and down at the Heritage Court the **White Lilly** has some Chai tea and goodies for you as well.

And for the single ladies, like myself? Kid-free, we can add in dinner and some wine and hang out downtown all night long! We puppets know how to part-ay!

Blackbird is also having another Kids-Only Shopping Night on Friday the 9th, from 5 to 9PM, as well as a **Men's Night** on Friday, December 16, from 6 to 10PM. Men — don't despair — Crystal and her staff will help you find just the right thing. And if she doesn't have it, try the many other women-friendly shops downtown. And if you still can't find just the right thing? Gift certificates, my friend. Gift certificates. She can buy exactly what she wants.

Now then. Women — there is even more for you! The White Lilly will show you **Saturdays are Satisfying** by bringing you weekly events. December 10 from 1 to 3PM, get a free hand therapy massage from Robert of Hands On Healing — DIBS! From 11AM to 1PM on the 17th you can get an angel reading while having reflexology done, and then in the afternoon meet Leah Hicks, a local artist who will be freshly back from the Florence Biennale (a global gathering of contemporary artists).

Back to kids — you know how much fun it is to capture that ephemeral moment when your kids are happy... all at the same time... for the family Christmas letter? This year, why not get the kind folks at **BH Photography** to help you out. And Santa too! Drop in for **Children's Photos with Santa** at 15 Bridge Street on December 10 or 17, from 12 to 4PM, and get a 5x7 print for \$10. \$10 more will get you the electronic file to email or make into cards. Proceeds go to The Young Awards (who support art in local schools).

We're going to be “busy, busy, busy!” (Magician, *Frosty the Snowman*), but your friends at MAAP (Mainstreet Almonte Attraction & Promotion) have organized not one but TWO very Christmassy ways to further help you through the holidays.

Up until noon December 23, at participating downtown Almonte businesses, fill out a ballot (no purchase necessary!) for a chance to win the contents of the **MAAP Money Tree** — gift certificates to more than 25 Almonte businesses... plus cash! It's a value of over \$500 and will be drawn on December 24 at 2PM. Wouldn't that be a nice way to add something extra to your Christmas gifts or to treat yourself once you are on that strict post-Christmas budget.

“And the elves! What about the elves?!” you ask. Well, you see, Santa loves you. And so does MAAP! So they've collected some of Almonte's friendliest and most shop-savvy downtowners and will set them loose on the streets, armed with information and wee gifties for you. Could be a coupon, could be a candy... you'll just have to wait and see. Look for **Almonte elves** to be walking the street (but not in a thigh-high boot, fishnet stocking kinda way) on December Saturdays and other Almonte fun days because, well, elves do



Throughout Mississippi Mills you will be welcomed by friendly shopkeepers and staff, and you might even meet an Almonte Elf!

love to party (not in a “have you got anything on you” kinda way).

Ok, I'd better go... I have shopping to do too, ya know. Oh! One more tip for you: the **Get It Here card** is another shop-local-save-money initiative from MAAP. Get the card for \$20 at one of several Almonte locations (Info Centre, Kentfield Kids, the White Lilly, Foodies Fine Foods, Kehla Design), and get a full year of rewards. Participating Mississippi Mills businesses (25 and growing) are listed at <get-it-here.ca>. The card makes a great gift. AND... why not get one for yourself with which to do your

shopping! Many shops offer 10 to 15% off all regularly priced merchandise, plus you can save money on the necessities, like coffee, sausages, cakes and catering!

So have a great December, enjoy the hustle and bustle, and if friends ask you what kind of gifts Miss Mills likes, tell them that my favourite things are all local, be they art, clothes, jewellery, food, or a night out (Folkus, Almonte in Concert, On Stage For Kids, Foodies music nights, dinner...) — I'm easy (and not in a Miss Piggy kinda way!).

the White Lilly

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Primrose 5-Piece Silver Tea Serving Set, Antiques, Etc.....	\$187
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Gifts for Environmentalists

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Get It Here Card to Buy Local, get-it-here.ca.....	\$20
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Sierra Leone Hippo or Camel Coins, Alliance Coin & Banknote.....	\$10



Enjoy the Beauty of Merrickville All Year Long

The merchants of Merrickville present the town's first calendar, featuring thirty-five images captured by Gordon Beck. "Gordon is an internationally-celebrated photographer and we are so fortunate that he has donated these pictures to us," said Karl Feige, a director of the Chamber of Commerce.

The calendar includes December of this year, making it immediately useful. It highlights Merrickville's charm and attractions, from Canalfest to the unique walking trails.

The Chamber wanted to produce a quality calendar that was flat and free hanging in a size large enough to use as a note keeper. Pictures had to be large enough so that they would be appreciated all month long. They succeeded on all points and produced a fine calendar — exactly what you would expect from this artistic community.

The 2012 calendar is available in all the stores in Merrickville for \$10 — a real bargain.



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Yoga Teacher Training Offered in Carp

For the first time ever, a yoga teacher training program will be offered in West Carleton — making this type of program accessible to those living in rural Ottawa and surrounding areas. This is of great interest to those who are interested in personal development and looking to improve their lives through yoga exercise, diet and meditation. Some go on to teach yoga part-time or full-time as a career transition, and others continue to integrate the program into their lifestyle and share their knowledge with family and friends.

This program will be held at the Yoga & Tea Studio, located in the village of Carp, conveniently nearby to those living in Kanata, Stittsville and Almonte. Many yoga enthusiasts also come from Arnprior and Carleton Place to take advantage of the variety of classes and special events held at this studio.

"We're very excited to be able to organize and offer this internationally-recognized Kundalini Level 1 Yoga Teacher Training Program at our studio," says director Nina Sidhu. "We have a strong Canadian team of trainers who, combined, have over seventy years of teaching yoga and medita-

tion." One of the lead trainers, naturopathic doctor Sat Dharam Kaur, was awarded the Naturopathic Doctor of the Year award by the Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors in 2000 for her work in breast cancer prevention and environmental education. Sat Dharam Kaur developed the Healthy Breast Program in an effort to educate women in naturopathic and yogic ways to prevent and treat breast cancer. She has taught the Healthy Breast Program to patients and the public since 1996 and lectures regularly at The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine on breast health and stress management. Sat Dharam's bestselling books include *A Call to Women*, *The Complete Natural Medicine Guide to Breast Cancer*, and *The Complete Natural Medicine Guide to Women's Health*.

The yoga teacher training program is based on Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan, who began teaching this ancient style of yoga in the late 1960s when he came to the United States from India. It is considered to be the mother of yoga styles — including yoga postures, breath techniques, meditations and over 800 kriyas — formulas of yoga sets selected to improve mental and physical

abilities. Many of the benefits of this style of yoga stem from its quick and efficient method of reducing stress in the mind-body, by working on the nervous system, glandular function and immune system. It is meant to be practiced by anyone; regardless of fitness level, life stage or current level of health.

"Our program will be spread over seven months, during which we will meet at the Yoga & Tea Studio for one weekend a month, from January to June," explains Sidhu. "This is a practical way to integrate what is learned over that weekend, have time to re-read the material, practice at home, keep up with regular work and family commitments, and prepare any questions as they arise. Then in July we will go to a beautiful waterfront retreat (at Wolfe Island, near Kingston) for a week-long retreat and really get to experience the yogic lifestyle of early morning yoga, healthy yogic meals, meditation and group fellowship. So it's a great approach to learning and integrating the experience!"

The Kundalini Level 1 Yoga Teacher Training Program is a 250-hour program recognized by the Yoga Alliance, and graduates of this program will be certified 200-hour Yoga Instructors. Registration is required by December 31, and discounts are available for early registrants.

A free info session and open house has been scheduled for Sunday, December 18, from 2 to 4PM, as a wonderful opportunity for those curious about Kundalini Yoga and to learn more about the program details such as the curriculum, training team and registration. Bring your yoga mat and dress to do some yoga!

For further inquiries, you can email Yoga & Tea Studio at <info@yogaandtea.com>, call 304-6320, and visit the website <yogaandtea.com> to view the training brochure online.

Gifts for Over \$100

Cast Iron Kettles, Log Holders & Tool Sets, Rideau Valley Hearth & Home. \$135 & up
Gift Certificate for 90 min Massage Therapy, Kim Narraway, RMT. \$115
Merrell Inuvik 550 Premium Goose Down Jacket, Vamos Outdoors. \$359
Suede Owen Barry Bags, The Village Idiot. \$135-190

Gifts for Parents

Centrepieces in Keepsakes Containers, The Blossom Shop. \$40 & up
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Diana Braithwaite & Chris Whitely, Westport, Jan 20–21
Cindy Doire/Kelly Sloan (Folkus), Almonte, Jan 21
Almonte in Concert, Jan 28
Toy & Collectible Show & Sale, Almonte, Jan 28
On Stage For Kids, Almonte, Jan 29
The Brothers Grimm, Perth, Feb 10
The Original Homewreckers w/Miss Angel, Westport, Feb 17
Not Now, Darling, Perth, Feb 17–19, 23–26
Pirates of Penzance, CP, Feb 24–26, Mar 2–3
Hawksley Workman (Folkus), Almonte, Feb 25
On Stage For Kids, Almonte, Feb 26
Tommy Hunter, Perth, Mar 9
Blackburn, Westport, Mar 16–17
Almonte in Concert, Mar 17
David Myles (PPAC), Perth, Mar 23
Silver Creek/Brothers Chaffey (Folkus), Almonte, Mar 24
Pakenham Maple Run Studio Tour, Mar 24–25
On Stage For Kids, Almonte, Mar 25
Lunch at Allen's (PPAC), Perth, Apr 13
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, Perth, Apr 13–15, 19–22
David Rotundo Band w/Julian Fauth, Westport, Apr 20–21
Almonte in Concert, Apr 21
Dragon's Gold, Perth, Apr 27
Art in the Attic, Almonte, Apr 27–29
Noises Off, Apr 27–29, May 4–5


Visual Arts 
Crown & Christmas Sale, Dec 2 (6-9PM); Dec 3 & 4 (10AM-5PM). Art & Fine Crafts. Textile Museum, Almonte. 256-3647, crownandpumpkin.com.
Open Studio - Mary Pfaff, Dec. 2, 5-9PM. Almonte Old Town Hall. marypfaff.ca.
CP Art Tour & Sale, Dec. 4, 10AM-4PM. Maps at the Train Station, 132 Coleman St. Downtown Carleton Place. carletonplaceart-tourandsale.wordpress.com.
Pottery Sale / Open House, Dec 9 (6-10PM), Dec 10 (10AM-5PM). Chandler Swain's pottery. Rowboat B&B, 178 Blakeney Rd, Blakeney. chandlerswain.ca.
Vernissage, Dec. 9, 7PM-9PM. Featuring Cathie Cooper. Brush Strokes, 129 Bridge St. Carleton Place. brushstrokesart.ca.
Vernissage, Dec. 10, 2-5PM. Wallace Edwards, Donna Lynd, Joyce Devlin, Lorraine English, Carol Lee Riley & Monika Seidenbush. Gallery Perth, Code's Mill, Perth. galleryperth.com.
AAAA Mtg/Potluck, Dec. 12, 6:30PM. Potluck, show & tell. Millfall Condos Meeting Room, Almonte. 4a-artists.ca.
Christmas Open House, Dec. 9–11. Bittersweet Fine Art & Craft, Burnstown. burnstown.ca/bittersweet.
Arnprior & District Quilters' Guild, Dec. 14, 7-9PM. Christian Education Centre, 257 John St. N. Arnprior. \$5 entry or \$20/yr
Pints'n Purls, Dec. 14, 6PM-9PM. Knitting group. Sponsored by Just Knitting. Old Mill Pub, Ashton. 492-5648.

Youth 
PAMT presents Glee!, Dec 9-10, 7:30pm; Guys and Dolls, Dec 1-3, 7:30pm. Myriad Centre, 2 Sherbrooke St. Perth. 267-9610, myriadcentre.ca. \$10

WHAT'S ON IN

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<div> Brush Strokes presents the art of Cathie Cooper <brushstrokesart.ca>  Baker Bob's Gallery presents Dennis Morrow's nature photography, giclee & paper prints  Gallery Perth at Code's Mill presents "The Life Fantastic", from Dec 10 <galleryperth.com>  Heirloom Café presents photos by Christine Birkett as of Dec 6 < heirloomcafe.ca>  Heritage House Museum presents Annual Art Show & Sale to Dec 19 <smithsfalls.ca/heritagehouse>  MVTM presents "Naturessence" – art quilts by Elaine Quehl & Catharina Breedyk Law to Dec 11 <mvtm.ca>  Palms Coffee Shop presents paintings by Pierre Langevin & Richard Skrobecki's pottery <palmsonline.ca>  Read's Book Shop presents artists from the Almonte & Area Artists' Association <readsbookshop.com>  Village Idiot Gallery/Philip K. Wood Framing of Almonte present "Through the Lens of Rod Mclvor", 292–4406  The Almonte Library Corridor Gallery presents Stephanie Ford Forrester  The Mississippi Mills Chamber Gallery presents Stephanie Tate-Sears, watercolour</div>			<div> Czech Boys Choir, Perth  Guys and Dolls, Perth  Jazz at Bally's, Ballygiblin's  Karaoke, The Downstairs Pub  Open Mic, Valley BBQ  Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow</div>
<div> Carp Celtic Jam, Carp</div>	<div> Open Mic, The Barley Mow</div>	<div> 'Prelude to Christmas' Concert, Smiths Falls  Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub  Toastmasters Club, Smiths Falls</div>	<div> Christmas Cantata, Almonte  Cinderella, Smiths Falls  Karaoke, The Downstairs Pub  Open Mic, Valley BBQ  Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow</div>
<div> Almonte & Area Artists' Assoc. Mtg/Potluck, Almonte  Almonte Coin Club, Almonte  Carp Celtic Jam, Carp</div>	<div> Carleton Place Town Singers Concert, Carleton Place  Open Mic, The Barley Mow  Perth Citizens' Band Christmas Concert, Perth  West Carleton Garden Club, Carp  Women's Business Group Mtg, CP</div>	<div> Arnprior Quilters' Guild, Arnprior  MM Chamber of Commerce Mixer, Almonte  Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub  Pints 'n Purls, Ashton Pub  Toastmasters Club, Smiths Falls</div>	<div> A Child's Christmas in Wales/The Christmas Tree, Perth  Karaoke, The Downstairs Pub  Open Mic, Valley BBQ  Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow  The Chimes, Perth</div>
<div> Carp Celtic Jam, Carp Masonic Lodge  Green Liquid Refreshments, Smiths Falls</div>	<div> Open Mic, The Barley Mow</div>	<div> Michelle Wright, Neat Coffee Shop  Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub  Toastmasters Club, Smiths Falls  Winter Solstice Party, Almonte</div>	<div> Karaoke, The Downstairs Pub  Open Mic, Valley BBQ  Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow</div>
<div> Carp Celtic Jam, Carp</div>	<div> Open Mic, The Barley Mow</div>	<div> Open Celtic Jam, Naismith Pub  Toastmasters Club, Smiths Falls</div>	<div> Karaoke, The Downstairs Pub  Open Mic, Valley BBQ  Terry Tufts, The Barley Mow</div>
<p>Photos with Santa, Dec. 10 & 17, Noon-4pm. Proceeds to Young Awards. BH Photography, 15 Bridge St. Almonte. www.bhphotography.ca.</p>	<p>A Child's Christmas in Wales/The Christmas Tree, Dec 15-17, 8pm; Dec 18 2pm. \$20 at Tickets Please; \$22 door. Students \$10 at door. Studio Theatre, Perth.</p> <p>Spiritual Cinema Circle, Dec. 25, 2PM. Myriad Centre, 2 Sherbrooke St. Perth. 267-4819. \$2 donation for theatre rental</p>	<p>Country Christmas Concert, Dec. 3, 7:30PM. Tay Valley Community Choir w/ Mississippi Windsong, Glen Tay Girls Group, Beryl Stott. Maberly Hall, 172 Maberly Elphin Rd. By donation</p> <p>Christmas Concert & Sing-A-Long, Dec. 4, 12PM. Xmas music by Almonte schools in Centennial Square, Mill St. Almonte.</p> <p>Handel's Messiah, Dec. 4, 2PM. North Grenville Concert Choir w/Divertimento Orchestra of Ottawa. Call 269-4414, or get tickets at Miller's of Merrickville. Merrickville United Church. ngcc.net.</p> <p>'Prelude to Christmas' Concert, Dec. 7, 7PM. The Central Band of the Canadian Forces' concert for Rideau Environmental Action League. Tickets at Modern Thymes (SF); the Perth Legion. SFDCl, 299 Percy St. Smiths Falls. 283-9819, REALaction.ca. \$10</p> <p>Christmas Cantata, Dec. 8, 7:30PM. Renfrew Presbyterian Church Chancel Choir. Proceeds to the Food Bank. Almonte</p>	<p>Presbyterian Church. Free will offering</p> <p>Dance w/Glen Silverson Band, Dec. 10, 8PM-Midnight, Tickets at The Spectacle Shoppe (Alm), Nicholson's (Pak), Arnprior Book Shop. Stewart Com. Centre, Pakenham. 624-5400. \$12</p> <p>Phyllis Sinclair, Dec. 10, 7:30PM. MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners. 259-2452, meraschoolhouse.org. \$15</p> <p>White Lake Acoustic Jam, Dec. 10, 7PM-10:30PM. White Lake Fire Hall, 142 Burnstown Rd. White Lake. 256-8675. \$5</p> <p>David Francey's Carols for a Christmas Eve, Dec. 11, 7PM. w/Kathryn Briggs & Terry Tufts. \$20 from Mill St. Books; \$25 at door. Almonte Old Town Hall. david-francey.com.</p> <p>Sing in the Season, Dec. 11, 2PM. CP & District Community Band. Donation to Food Bank. Zion-Memorial United Church, Carleton Place. 253-4737, Free</p>

Theatre 
A Month of Sundays, Dec 2-3, 8pm. Dec 4, 2pm. Tickets Please (485-6434). Students w/ID, \$10. Studio Theatre, Perth. studio-theatreperth.com. \$22; \$20 in adv.
Alice in Wonderland, Dec 2, 3, 9, 10 (7:30pm). Dec 4, 10 (2pm). Tickets at Arts Carleton Place, 132 Coleman St. CP Town Hall. mississippimudds.ca. \$20 evg; \$15 matinee
Cinderella, Dec 8-10, 16-17 at 7:30pm. Dec 11, 18 at 2pm. Smiths Falls Community Theatre. Tickets at Compositions. The Station Theatre, 63 Victoria Ave. Smiths Falls.
The Chimes, Dec 9, 10, 15, 16, 17 8pm; Dec 11, 18 2pm. Full Circle Theatre, Perth. barndoorproductions.ca. \$22; \$18 in adv.

Literature 
1st Edition Reading Series, Dec. 3, 7PM. Readings by Dani Couture, Jenny Sampirisi & Claudia Coutu Radmore. Backbeat, 6 Wilson St. W. Perth. 466-0663
Book Signing, Dec. 10, Helen Douglas. Read's Book Shop, 130 Lansdowne Ave, Carleton Place. 257-7323.

Music 
Czech Boys Choir, Dec. 1, 8PM. Perth Performing Arts Committee. Tickets Please, 485-6434. PDCI, Perth. perthpac.org.

Light Up The Night, Dec. 2, 7PM. Wayne Rostad & Leanne Cusack host musical entertainers & Santa. Mill St. Almonte. www.lightupthenightalmonte.com. Free

Carp Christmas Market, Dec 2 (3-8pm), Dec 3 (8am-2pm). Carp Agricultural Hall

Farmers' Market / Book Fair, Dec. 3, 10AM-4PM. Rideau Vista School, Westport. info@westportfarmersmarket.ca.

Horse-drawn Trolley Rides, Dec. 3, 11AM-4PM. Downtown Carleton Place,

L'Arche Gifts of Light Craft/Bake Sale, Dec. 3, 10AM-4PM. Kirkman House, 294 John St. Arnprior.

Lanark County Genealogical Society Mtg, Dec. 3. Potluck at noon, AGM. Archives Lanark, 1920 Concession 7, Perth.

Nick of Time Artisan Show, Dec. 3, 10AM-4PM. McMartin House, 125 Gore St. E. Perth. 278-2712.

Open House, Dec. 3, 1-3PM. Healthy holidays!, Carp Ridge EcoWellness Centre, 839-1198, ecowellness.com. Free

Perth House Tour, Dec 3-4 (10:30-3:30). \$30, from Home Furniture (Perth), Elizabeth Interiors (SF), The Blossom Shop (CP) or call 267-2270.

Pakenham Santa Claus Parade, Dec. 3, 1PM. 256-1077x21.

1860s Christmas Tea, Dec. 4, 1-4PM. Kids make a decoration & see Santa. Art show/sale. Heritage House Museum, Smiths Falls. \$5; seniors \$3.50; 3-11 \$2.50

Almonte Santa Claus Parade, Dec. 4, 1:30PM. 256-1077x21.

Smiths Falls Toastmasters Club, Wednesdays, 7PM. Courtyard Cafe, Smiths Falls. robrodine@hotmail.com.

Christmas at the Railway Museum, Dec. 10, 11AM-3PM. Help trim the tree, decorate wooden ornaments. \$4.50; seniors \$3.50; children 3-11 \$2.50; under 3s free. Railway Museum, Smiths Falls.

Kintail Country Christmas, Dec. 10, 10AM-4PM. Crafts, children-only gift shop, photos w/Father Xmas. Mill of Kintail, 2854 Concession 8, Almonte. 256-3610x2, mvc.on.ca. \$15 per vehicle

Pet Pics w/Santa, Dec. 10 & 11, 10AM-4PM. Arnprior & Dist. Humane Soc. fundraiser. Arnprior Shopping Mall, 623-0916.

TYPES Night of Stars, Dec. 10, 7-9PM. Entertainment, treats & annual youth awards. TYPES Youth Centre, 65 Mill St. Almonte.

Christmas Crafting, Dec. 11, 1-4PM. All ages, skill levels. Heritage House Museum, Smiths Falls. 283-6311. \$15

Christmas House Tour, Dec. 11, 12:30-5PM. Tickets at Aikenhead's Drug Store, RVH Gift Shop. Renfrew area, 432-3088. \$25

Almonte Coin Club, Dec. 12, 7PM. Alliance Coin & Banknote, 88 Mill St. Almonte.

West Carleton Garden Club Meeting, Dec. 13, 7:30PM. Potluck. Carp Memorial Hall, sites.google.com/site/westcarleton-gardenclub. \$5 for non-members

Women's Business Group Mtg, Dec. 13, 7:30AM. Buster's Bar and Grill, 515 McNeely Dr. Carleton Place. wbgroup.ca.

MM Chamber of Commerce Mixer, Dec. 14, 6-8:30PM. Xmas program & carol singing. Heritage Court, 14 Mill St. Almonte.

Kundalini Yoga Info Session, Dec. 18, 2-4PM. Info for Teacher Training. Yoga & Tea, Carp. 304-6320, yogaandtea.com. Free

Green Liquid Refreshments, Dec. 19, 7PM. Coffee Culture, 2 Russell St. E. Smiths Falls.

Winter Solstice Party, Dec. 21. Refreshments, psychic readings (5:30-10pm). Soul Scents, 42 Mill St. Almonte. soulscents.ca.

Breakfast with Soul, Dec. 30, 8-10AM, The White Lilly, Heritage Court, Almonte. www.lillywhite.ca. Free

New Year's Eve at Café Postino, Dec. 31, 7PM. Cocktails, Table d'hôte with wine, champagne, music by Peter Brown. Reserve at 256-6098, \$125 pp.

Valley Voices Christmas Concert, Dec. 11, 8PM. For MVTM. Almonte United Church, \$10; \$7 in adv at Baker Bob's

Carleton Place Town Singers Concert, Dec. 13, 7PM. (Snowdate: Dec 20). St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 39 Bridge St. Carleton Place. 257-8580. \$10

Perth Citizens' Band Christmas Concert, Dec. 13, 7:30PM. St. James the Apostle Anglican Church, Perth. 256-4221, perth-band.ca. \$5 each; \$10 for families

Almonte in Concert, Dec. 17, 8PM. Almonte Old Town Hall. 253-3353, almonteinconcert.ca. \$30 adults, \$15 students

Carleton Place Country Christmas, Dec. 18, 2PM. For the Food Bank. Darlene Thibault, Pat Willbond, Smiling Jack Denovan. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, CP. \$10 at Temptations, SRC or door

Goulbourn Male Chorus, Dec. 18, 4PM. \$12 in adv from Gaia Java. \$15 at door. 16 & under free. Holy Spirit Parish, Stittsville.

Tapestry of Light Celtic Christmas Concert, Dec. 18, 7:30PM. Community voices w/ a Celtic winds consort. Donation to Food Bank. St. Andrew's United Church, Pakenham. 624-5400.

Wolf Grove Singers Carols & Singalong, Dec. 18, 7pm. Guthrie United Church, 2819 Tatlock Rd. Clayton.

The Swan at Carp (Falldown Lane Carp, 839-7926)
Dec 2 & 16 Steve Barrette Trio 7-10pm.
Dec 31 Steve Barrette Trio 7pm-12am

The Downstairs Pub at JR's (385 Ottawa St. Almonte, 256-2031) Karaoke Thurs, 9pm. no cover.
Dec 3 Dale Wright, 9pm, no cover
Dec 9 Billy Armstrong, 9pm. no cover
Dec 10 Posse, 9pm. \$5
Dec 23 Buntline, 9pm. \$5

Ballygiblin's Restaurant & Pub (151 Bridge Street, Carleton Place, 253-7400)
Dec 1 Jazz w/Peter Brown, 6-9pm

Fiddleheads (Code's Mill, Perth, 267-1304)
Dec 4, 18 jazz with Clay Young, 12-3pm

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

The Cove (2 Bedford St. Westport, 273-3636):
Dec 3, 10, 16 Kevin Head 6-9pm. free
Dec 9 Chet Doxas & Jonathan Stewart
Dec 17 Shawn McCullough, doubleBack \$10
Dec 23 Christmas Jazz Night w/Spencer Evans Trio & Emily Fennell, 9-11pm. free
Dec 31 New Year's Eve! \$120/couple

The Barley Mow (79 Little Bridge St. Almonte, 256-5669): Open Mike w/Jumpin' Jimmy Leroux Tues (7pm); Terry Tufts Thurs (8-11pm).

Neat Coffee Shop (1715 Calabogie Rd. Burnstown, 433-3205): 8pm
Dec 2 Sarah Slean, \$35
Dec 3 Paul Reddick, \$20

Dec 9 Jim Bryson's Christmas Revue, \$26/\$40w/dinner
Dec 10 C.R.Avery, \$14
Dec 16, 17 MonkeyJunk, \$22.50
Dec 21 Michelle Wright, \$65

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

Harry McLean's Pub (111 St. Lawrence St. Merrickville, 269-4223): Dec 3 Rod Baird

Valley BBQ (10470A Hwy 7, Carleton Place, 257-1700): Open Stage Thurs (9pm)
Dec 3 Ric Denis & 3, 8:30pm

Carp Masonic Lodge (3704 Carp Rd.): Carp Celtic Jam, \$3 or \$25 for 3 mos, all levels, Mon, no charge (7-9pm).

Old Mill at Ashton Pub (113 Old Mill Rd. Ashton) Open Mic w/Kelly Sloan, 2-5pm (Dec 4, 11, 18)

I'm Dreaming...

We went to see *White Christmas* last week. Although we'd forgotten the story, we sure did remember the songs, and I bet right now you have an ear worm of that melody rattling in your brain. The theatre was a sea of grey heads, all of whom identified with the sentiments of that rich Irving Berlin score.

by Glenda Jones

There are traditions that go along with every season, but Christmas seems to conjure up the most. When I hear that old standby, I have visions of many Christmases, and "remember the time" becomes the standard phrase that connects us to past holidays. They weren't all sugar plums and cranberries, but they were indeed memorable.

So, here we go...

I'm dreaming of a white Christmas... just like the one when it rained for twelve hours solid and we had to don rubber boots over our jammies and bail out the basement, all the while praying it wouldn't freeze up... which it did. Our dinner was pork and beans because who had time to cook? We were left with a flaccid 25-pound turkey thawing on the counter while we all took turns with pails and a pump trying to stay ahead of the deluge.

Just like the ones we used to know... What we used to know was that it was likely our cat would produce kittens early in December, and by Christmas they'd be just the age to tear around the house in a pre-dawn frenzy. We used to know that, for sure, as least one gift would be torn asunder, and at least one precious ornament would be de-

stroyed before the little darlings were through with the holidays. I'm not telling you about the year the cat hauled the tree over, and nearly electrocuted herself in the light strings.

Where the tree tops glisten... That would be the year an ice storm moved in on Christmas Eve, putting out the power for three days. Again, turkey was a no-go, but worse, our guests were also a no-go, and worse still, we couldn't even console ourselves with a little libation, as we were stuck in the house far from the necessary supplier. The glistening trees shed their branches in vast numbers, littering the yard and driveway, which was a skating rink the plough couldn't even navigate. So much for glamorous glitter!

And children listen... to whatever pop music is coming through those headphones...

And children listen... to whatever pop music is coming through those headphones...

seasonal fodder, nor is *Jingle Bell Rock* for the umpteenth time! And didn't we wish the children really would listen when we said they had to go to bed or Santa would not be coming?

To hear sleigh bells in the snow... I remember the year the neighbour came up the road with his horse and sleigh loaded with kids bundled in furs and giggles. Our dogs exploded out of the house in full furious bark to investigate, and the horse shied, and the dogs ran, and the kids hollered, and the sleigh careened down the road at breakneck speed. That was some tranquil Christmas scene to behold!

I'm dreaming... with every Christmas card I write... while I sit there trying to make my life sound exciting. I toy with the idea of writing fiction, and giving my friends some facsimile of my life instead of a rehash of what I did last year. I wish I could remember in the summer that I'm supposed to do really exciting things so my Christmas letter can be a masterpiece rather than a litany of mediocrity.

May your days be merry and bright... like the year we had two babies in diapers and the wringer washer whumped incessantly and even on Christmas Day I was doing laundry and it wouldn't stop raining long enough to get anything dry and we hung the soggy washing on a wobbly rack in the hallway and my father tripped on it in the night. It wasn't very merry, and it certainly wasn't bright. If Santa had heard the blue language emitted from beneath that tangle

of diapers, there would have been no presents in the morning! Two days later a shiny new clothes dryer appeared at the front door, and I thanked "Santa" profusely and forever for it. And *no*, I didn't plan that fiasco!

And may all your Christmases be white... with just the right amount of snow: enough to play in and maybe shovel if that's what you like to do, with trees that are laced with fluffy flakes, with lights that twinkle and friends who call, with chocolate and fruitcake, with proper Christmas music you can sing, with a cozy fire and good food and, above all, with love and best wishes.

Humm Bits

TYPS Night of Stars

The TYPS Youth Centre Night of Stars is an annual celebration of phenomenal youth from the Mississippi Mills community, as well as a thank you to the many supporters who contribute so much to the continuing success of the centre. All members of the community are welcome to attend the event at TYPS, 65 Mill Street in Almonte (near the Barley Mow) on December 10, from 7 to 9PM, for an evening of entertainment, sweet treats, and the presentation of the annual youth awards!

Carleton Place Country Christmas

On Sunday, December 18, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, along with Lyle Dillabough Productions, will present the 2nd annual Carleton Place Country Christmas Showcase. Held as a real community celebration, the show is also a fundraiser, with the proceeds going towards stocking the shelves of the Lanark County Food Bank.

Carleton Place Town Councillor Jerry Flynn and singer Judi Moffat will host the event, which features a number of local entertainers, including Darlene Thibault, Pat Willbond, "Smiling" Jack Denovan and a sleigh-load of others.

Tickets are \$10 each and are available in advance at Temptations and SRC Music. They will also be sold at the door. Show time is 2PM.

Felting Workshops

Add that homemade touch to Christmas decorating by taking a felting workshop at Peace of Mind Creations and Friends. Make little felted Christmas decorations on December 10 or 11, from 9 to 11AM.

Peace of Mind Creations is located in Heritage Court, 14 Mill Street in Almonte. Please call 461-7662 to reserve your spot, or simply drop by their gallery/studio. On December 7 they will return from Toronto's One Of A Kind Show and will have new works by glass artist Lezlie Winemaker, as well as metal and glass artist Rhona Tai, to add to their drums, music boxes, and varied collection of wooden, felted and pewter art.

Sammy Skunk — From Page to Stage

Congratulations are due to Almonte author Iris Boston! Her children's book *Sammy Skunk Finds a Friend* has recently taken several interesting twists and turns, and will soon be performed by the Orpheus Musical Theatre Society.

How did Sammy the lonely skunk go from page to stage? First of all, Iris turned the story into a play called *Let's Be Friends*, which won the children's division of the Ottawa Little Theatre national playwriting competition. In yet another transformation, the play became a musical for children called *Be a Friend*, with Iris contributing the book and Gordon Carruth creating music and lyrics. The theme of the show is that to find a friend, you have to be a friend, and that differences don't prevent friendships from developing.

Next up, Orpheus will be presenting a workshop production of the show on December 3 and 4, with performances at 1PM and 3:30PM each day. The shows will take place at Orpheus House, located at 17 Fairmont Avenue (just east of Parkdale near Wellington).

Tickets are \$10 each and are available by calling 729-4318 or emailing Louise at <info@orpheus-theatre.ca>. More information is available on the Orpheus website at <orpheus-theatre.ca>.

Toy & Collectible Show & Sale

Plan a trip to Almonte on Saturday, January 28, for the annual Toy and Collectible Show and Sale featuring over twenty local vendors and exhibitors at the Almonte Civitan Hall, at 500 Almonte Street. The proceeds of the show will go to help fund programs that Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lanark County has in place in the community. There is ground level entry and free parking. A canteen is available as well. The show will run from 9AM to 2PM. Organizers are striving to present a well-balanced selection of contemporary and vintage toys and collectibles. Admission is \$5, with children under 12 getting in for free. There is a vendor fee of \$30 per booth and an exhibitor fee of \$20 per booth. Call 283-0570 or visit <bigbrothersbigsisterslanark.ca> for further details.

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Studio Theatre: Two Faces of the Season

Christmas often has two faces. One presents us with an idyllic Currier and Ives time of sleigh bells and snowflakes, gifts and parties, stuffing the turkey and trimming the tree, and gathering in parlours or in churches to sing the old familiar carols. It's the kind of idealized Christmas many long for.

But Christmas can also be a time of terrible loneliness, a condition made worse by the surrounding merriment of others. Whether it is a young person away from home for the first time or an elderly soul whose family is gone or is living too far away to visit, Christmas can be a sad time.

This December, **Studio Theatre Productions** presents these two very different faces of Christmas in its dual presentation of the Dylan Thomas classic *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, with its nostalgic look at Christmas past, and Norm Foster's modern fast-paced comedy *The Christmas Tree*, about two lonely people who vie for possession of the last sad Christmas tree on the lot.

A Child's Christmas in Wales is as much a Christmas classic as Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* or Clement Moore's 'Twas the Night Before Christmas. It is Thomas's nostalgic look back at Christmases past with his family in Wales. Originally written for radio, then later published as a children's story, it is a kaleidoscopic series of passages, creating vivid impressions of a young boy's memories of Christmas.

On this occasion, the story has been adapted for stage by Studio Theatre's own David Parry, veteran actor, director and currently the artistic director of Studio Theatre Productions. David has also added some appropriate Christmas and/or Welsh music, which is sung by the various aunts, uncles and neighbours.

What David expected to be the two major challenges in mounting this production turned out to be not so daunting after all. He was initially concerned about finding appropriate music and the people to sing it, but members of the **Men of the Tay** and the **Women of the Tay** have come forward and, as David puts it, have been "just absolutely marvellous."

The other challenge was finding four boys, ten to fourteen years old, to take the speaking parts of Dylan and friends. But even that proved no problem as he found himself with four highly talented young actors: Javier Mullally, Cameron Clark, Kye Foley and Brandt Kryvenchuk, all eager to be part of this classic story. They are joined by a cast of eight adults and David himself as the narrator. This production of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* promises to be one of

those magical experiences that make the Christmas season special.

On the flip side of the coin and far from nostalgic is Norm Foster's *The Christmas Tree*. It's a story of two people alone on Christmas Eve, but with his inimitable gift for comedy, Foster turns the situation into a feel-good story. Superbly acted by Lucas

people who battle over possession of the last available tree on Christmas Eve. As always, Foster includes the hint of a more serious theme. As Lucas so aptly describes it: "*The Christmas Tree* is about the Christmas spirit and how even on the worst day of your life, you can still find that one gleaming moment to share with somebody else."

This Christmas package opens December 15 at 8PM, followed by performances December 16 and 17 at 8PM with a matinee on Sunday, December 18, at 2PM. Tickets are \$20 in advance (at The Book Nook or Tickets Please in Perth) and \$22 at the door. Phone or credit card orders can be made through Tickets Please at 39 Foster Street, 485-3434 or <ticketsplease.ca>. There is a student rate of \$10 (with I.D.) at the door. For further information, call the Studio Theatre box office at 267-7469 or visit <studiotheatreperth.com>.

Whether you're planning to spend Christmas with family and friends, or you're facing the day alone, you'll

find a stocking full of Christmas cheer from this dual offering of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* and *The Christmas Tree*. Be sure to put it on your Christmas list.

— Joan Sonnenburg



Four talented young actors help bring *A Child's Christmas in Wales* to life at the Studio Theatre in Perth. (l-r) Kye Foley, Javier Mullally, Cameron Clark (absent: Brandt Kryvenchuk).

Tennant and Laurie Reesor (who share an ensemble award for acting from the Eastern Ontario Drama League One-Act Play Festival), *The Christmas Tree* presents the hilarious confrontation by these two lonely



Merry Christmas

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Nothing Says Christmas Like S'mores

I want to believe. I do. I want to believe that the Occupy (enter the name of some important metropolitan area) movement is vital. I want to believe that what people are demonstrating for is a change we can all get behind. I want to believe that the Occupy move-

by Steve Scanlon

ment is a catalyst to change. The truth is, I want to believe because the ideas behind the movement are, for the most part, good ones, if you can get beyond the rhetoric. I want to believe, I truly do, but the thing is, for me, it sounds an awful lot like... well... camping.

Here's where I should say: "The opinions of this article do not necessarily reflect those of this newspaper." I know this is a touchy subject to get around and I don't mean to make light of it despite the fact that I'm alright and the world's all wrong.

Then again, I was alive in the sixties and seventies. I know some of those no good, long-haired hippy freak protesters who changed the world. I'm fairly certain a few of them may have nine-to-five jobs, car payments and mortgages now, not to mention male pattern baldness. They, like me, are selling their souls to the one percent. Worse, some of them may even be the one percent. I know, crazy right? I'm no happier than the next guy that my bank doesn't know my name and deposits billions of dollars on the backs of us working stiffs. It's just that, well, I'm old and jaded. Not my fault, I lived through the sixties and seventies, remember. If, on the other hand, camping is going to get me some of my money back... bring on the s'mores baby.

The best thing to happen over the last several months is that everybody is more aware. You can't go camping, in the woods or any decent urban park, without hearing about the movement, and that's a definitive step in the right direction. It's being discussed over beer and pickled eggs, over breakfast cereal, at family gatherings and, dare I say it... on park benches. In that respect the movement is a huge success. Will it change things? I do hope it will — I have children who still have a chance.

Can I support it? I do like the ideas behind the protests, and peaceful protest will always get my vote over some of the other means of getting your opinion to the public. I prefer to be a tad more subtle myself (but look where that has taken me — they barely know my name at the bank). Cynicism and sarcasm work better for me than camping ever will — not that I really mind camping — see s'mores.

Here's what I can do. I'm going shopping at our local stores. I'm Christmas shopping at the independent gift shop or the local clothing boutique. I'm taking in some local craft fairs. I'm eating lunch at the "little guy's" restaurant instead of the corporate chain (though that's more of a digestive choice). I'm buying books from John Pigeau at Backbeat Books, Music and Gifts in Perth (shameless plug or great buying decision, you choose) or around the corner at The Book Worm.

Am I a longhaired radical freak? Not anymore. Have I hopped onto the bandwagon? Not if it's moving I'm not — I'm not as agile as I once was. Nope! I'm just selfish. The fact that my selfish ways fit right into the ideology of the Occupy movement just tickles me pink.

I shop locally and I find great deals on products that I know my loved ones will appreciate. I'm selfish because I want to shop where somebody actually cares about their customers, will chat, recommend things that make sense and... wait for it... smile. Yes, smile. I've said it before; I'll say it again. I've seen it with my own eyes. In Westport, they smile. Not everybody, not all the time, they're not freaks, but as a rule, nine out of ten times you'll get a smile and the tenth time, well, you probably didn't deserve it. You've got to give it to get it. A little quid pro... something or another. I love Latin; *Cogito Ergo Stump* (I think, therefore, I am puzzled).

So, some of my favorite smiley places in Westport:

The Pine Cone — they smile a lot in The Pine Cone. The owner is usually around and if by chance she is out, the staff has her back. They have a wonderful collection of really unique (and sometimes just wacky) gift ideas.

Chris Reynolds Designs — the perfect clothing store for men to buy for women (and women to buy for women, I'm sure). The staff has great taste and is very helpful to guys who, like me, are women's clothing stunted.

Latimer Soap Works — you can get anything from fun to funky soaps and body care products. I particularly like the soaps geared towards children with little surprises enclosed (that you can only get to if you wash behind your ears).

Jake by the Lake — where Life is Good.

Far Visions Gallery — where I have cried "Help!" on many occasions and Sandra has always come through. This is where I shop for the special people in my life.

Village Green Originals — where they have one of everything and two of some things. **Lower Mountain Mercantile** — where they have everything else. And just for giggles, have you thought about buying for the folks who like, say... fish? **The Salmon House**. Pie? **Church Street Bakery**. Tarts? **Westport Bakery**. Aromatherapy? **Sundari Day Spa**. How about fishing lures? **Murphy's Bait and Tackle**. Hot Sauce? **Rosie Yumski's Fine Foods**. That one-of-a-kind artwork? **Artemisia**. I could do this all day. I'm just scratching the surface of what our wee town can offer. There are far too many shops to mention (for which I willingly take the flak).

The point is, these are all relatively small boutiques, independently-owned and operated by people like you — yes you. There's nobody upstairs counting beans and begrudging another piece of coal on the fire. These folks are the 99%. They rely on us as much as we should rely on them. Occupy Westport (or any independent business) and take a stand, or not, just shop. Either way you win.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from my family to One Hundred Percent of your family.

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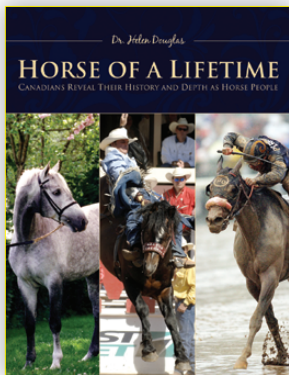
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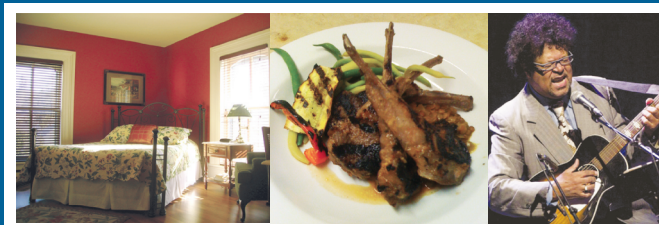
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The Music of the Season

Once December hits, it's pretty hard to avoid hearing Christmas music, whether it be familiar Christmas carols or the newest Christmas CD by your favourite artist. As a musician, I've always been interested in where some of these songs came from, and so I decided to do a little digging.

I think that it is pretty amazing that songs written hundreds of years ago are still being per-

by Tony Stuart

formed and listened to today. The earliest known example that I could find, written by a Spanish poet named Prudentius, was written in the fourth century, and is still sung today in some European churches. Keep in mind that music notation as we know it today didn't even exist back in the fourth century, which makes this even more impressive.

Obviously, the first Christmas carols were religious in nature. The words to *Adeste Fideles*, better known today as *O Come All Ye Faithful*, can be traced back to the thirteenth century, along with tunes such as *The Holly and the Ivy* and *Good King Wenceslas*. Interestingly enough, Christmas carols nearly disappeared in England when Oliver Cromwell and the Puritans came to power in 1647. Apparently, they decided that celebrating Christmas was a frivolous exercise, but people still sang them in secret. It's pret-

ty hard to imagine the Christmas season without music, isn't it?

There are some great traditions behind some of these carols. The *Boar's Head Carol* was originally a pagan song, adapted by Christians for Christmas celebrations. It was first printed in 1521, and was sung as the boar's head, a traditional Christmas dish, was carried into the room on Christmas Day. In medieval times, there was a tradition known as wassailing, in which groups of singers went from house to house and were rewarded with gifts such as mince pies, ale, or money. It sounds to me like a middle ages' version of a pub crawl!

Modern Christmas carols originated in the nineteenth century. *Jingle Bells*, by James Pierpont, is one of the most commonly sung songs in the world. Written in Medford, Massachusetts, it was inspired by the town's annual sleigh races. Fun- nily enough, it was actually written as a Thanksgiving song, but gradually came to be associated with Christmas, since American Thanksgiving and Christmas are so close together. It was also the first song to be broadcast from outer space! In 1965, two astronauts aboard the Gemini 6 spacecraft smuggled a harmonica and a set of sleigh bells aboard, and sent an impromptu version of this song to mission control.

Of course, Santa Claus is mentioned in many Christmas songs. The whole development of the idea of Santa Claus is fascinating. In short, the inspiration for Santa

came from Saint Nicholas, and through the centuries the story evolved into the jolly old man living at the North Pole. The first mention of Santa Claus in a song dates back to 1853, in a song called *Santa Claus* by Louis Antoine Jullien. Thanks to advertising done by the Coca Cola Company in the 1930s, the now-familiar image of man in the red suit came into being. There have been hundreds, if not thousands, of songs written about the man in the red suit. I have a confession to make: I have a soft spot for Santa Claus, because my father was a Santa every Christmas for thirty years before he passed away a few years ago.

Here in Lanark County, anyone who is in tune with the local music scene knows that we are fortunate to have many talented individuals in our midst. I was recently asked by George Turcotte, of Mississippi Mills Musicworks, to listen to his latest CD and give him some feedback. The CD is called *Mellonta Tauta*, and is a concept album. Besides George's guitar stylings, the album also features contributions from Terry Tufts, Kathryn Briggs, Peter Brown, Tobias Meis, Victor Maltby, and Katy Maltby. While I certainly didn't intend for this to become a review column, I would be happy to mention the work of local musicians in this space.

I really enjoyed listening to *Mellonta Tauta*. It features some very fine playing and vocals, and a lot of thought and effort obviously went into its creation. While listening to it, there were times when I was



George Turcotte's latest CD, *Mellonta Tauta*, is available at Mississippi Mills Musicworks in Almonte <mississippimillsmusicworks.com>

reminded of a variety of artists, including David Bowie and Bruce Springsteen. I think the album is well worth your money and time, and suggest that you give it a listen.

Christmas is a busy time of year, but that being said, I hope that everyone is able to enjoy the holiday season, especially while singing or listening to your favourite Christmas music! While you are at it, why not attend a Christmas concert at your local school? Watching student musicians perform is a wonderful thing, and it will certainly help bring joy to your holidays. All the best to you and yours this holiday season.

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

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Enjoy a Heritage Christmas in Smiths Falls

It's that time of the year when the garlands, trees, red bows and all the other old-fashioned ornaments and decorations go up at the sensational museums of Smiths Falls. This year's festive season features a variety of entertainment, demonstrations, hands-on activities, and plenty of opportunities to get something special to put under your Christmas tree.

Get your holiday shopping done early this year. Come to the **Heritage House Museum** for Rideau Canal themed books, available from December 2 until December 23. This special display is brought to you by the Rideau Canal Museum and will feature popular sellers from authors Ken Watson, Ed Bebee, Ron Corbett, Robert Legget and more. Check out Heritage House Museum's gift shop to find books and gifts for the whole family. Open daily, 10:30AM to 4:30PM until Christmas.

Stop by the **Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario's** Christmas sale throughout December with 15 to 50% off gift shop merchandise. Be sure to check out the variety of unique Christmas gifts including favourites like Thomas and Friends Wooden Railway sets. The Railway Museum is open weekends (Sat. 10AM to 4PM, Sun. 11AM to 4PM) until Christmas.

Share in the sights, sounds and flavours of an 1860s Christmas Tea at **Heritage House Museum** on Sunday, December 4. Enjoy a cup of tea or hot apple cider with some home-baked seasonal treats from

1 to 4PM. Meet some of the over thirty local artists exhibiting their work in the 30th annual Art Show & Sale. Gather around the traditional decorated tree and enjoy the sound of seasonal carols sung in the parlour. Younger visitors can make a festive decoration in the craft corner or search the museum to help Santa find his elves! Their faces will surely brighten up as Santa Claus makes a special appearance, before packing his sleigh on Christmas Eve. Come enjoy this festive afternoon and find the perfect Christmas gift for family, friends or yourself! Adults \$5, seniors \$4, and children \$3.50.

Bring the whole family down for Christmas at the **Railway Museum** on Saturday, December 10, from 11AM to 3PM. Help trim the museum's 12-foot Christmas tree and decorate wooden ornaments to hang on the tree or to take home. Warm up in a wooden caboose with some home-baked Christmas treats and hot chocolate. Santa will be riding the rails to the museum and will be available for photos from 1 to 2:30PM. All activities are included with regular admission. Adults \$4.50, seniors \$3.50, children 3 to 11 pay \$2.50, and kids under 3 get in free!

Come to the **Heritage House Museum** on Sunday, December 11, from 1PM to 4PM for a family afternoon of Christmas Crafting! Learn how to weave grapevines into a beautiful wreath, and decorate it for the holidays. Make your own sparkling glass ornament to give as a gift, or to hang on the tree. This workshop will be fun for all ages and skill levels. Families are encouraged to participate together and children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult. Each individual craft session is \$15. Ask museum staff for details, and please pre-register by calling 283-6311. This event is brought to you by the Rideau Canal Museum, hosted at the



The Heritage House Museum (above) is one of three museums in Smiths Falls — all of which are planning special events in December

Heritage House Museum, 11 Old Sly's Rd, Smiths Falls.

Mark your calendars with these events, because the sensational museums of Smiths Falls are sure to get you in the Christmas spirit! For more information about these or any upcoming events, call Heritage House Museum at 283-6311, Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario at 283-5696 and the Rideau Canal Museum at 284-0505. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!



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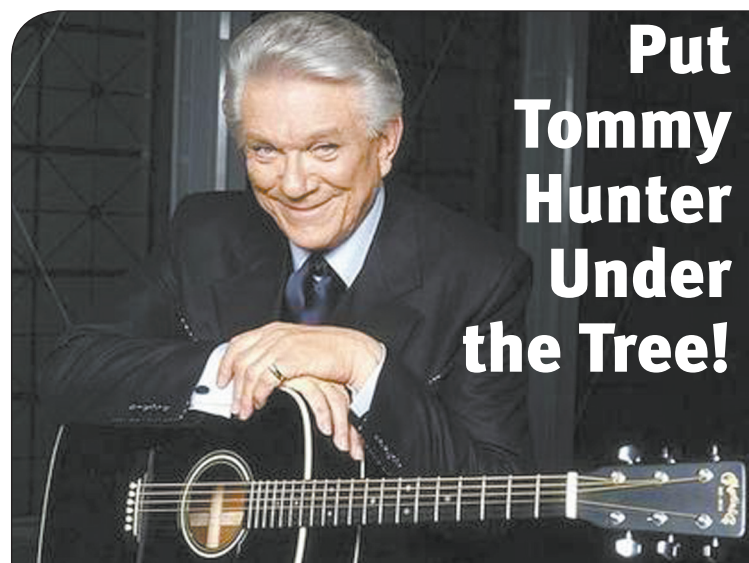
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Put Tommy Hunter Under the Tree!

Just in time for the gift-giving season, the Perth Performing Arts Committee (PPAC) announces a special show in addition to their regular series. On Friday, March 9 at 7PM PPAC invites you (and everyone on your list) to come out and hear the legendary Tommy Hunter on his very last cross-Canada tour!

Tommy Hunter started his CBC career playing rhythm guitar on the TV show Country Hoedown. The Tommy Hunter Show began as a CBC radio program in 1960 and went on to replace Country Hoedown on CBC television in 1965, and it ran until 1992. Since then he has continued to tour with his band, The Travelling Men. The Tommy Hunter Show helped develop the careers of several well-known celebrities including Garth Brooks, Shania Twain, the Judds, and Alanis Morissette.

Tommy himself was inducted into the Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame in 1984. In 1986, Hunter was made a Member of the Order of Canada. He has received three Canadian Juno Awards and one Gemini Award. In 1990, he was given a place in the Country Music Hall of Fame's "Walkway of Stars".

Don't miss your chance to catch Tommy on his final cross-Canada tour — it's history in the making! The show starts at 7PM on March 9 at the Mason Theatre in PDCI. Tickets are \$48 (including the convenience fee) from Tickets Please in Perth. Visit <ticketsplease.ca> or call 485-6434 to order yours in time to get them under the tree!

Congratulations!

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Meet us:

Upcoming Mixer:

Wednesday, December 14

Join us from 6-8:30PM for a special Christmas program and carol singing, catered by The Mill Street Crepe Company. Please note that this mixer will take place at **Heritage Court**, 14 Mill Street in Almonte.

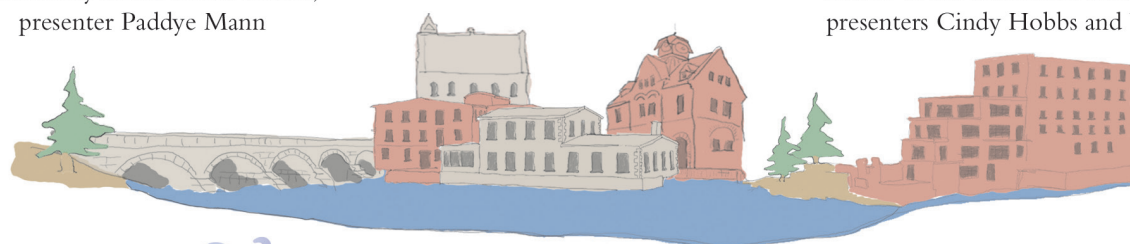


Presenter Wanda Fairhurst, **Margie and Ritchie Argue**, winners of the Community Involvement Award, presenter Paddy Mann

Amber and Craig Hall from **Equator Coffee Roasters**, winners of the Creativity and Innovation Award, presenters Kris Rienneau and Adrian Ayotte



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