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South Dundas Christmas Trees to go out in a blaze of glory

Terry Tinkess
Record Staff

MORRISBURG – There is nothing like a bonfire on a winter's eve to bring home the joy of the season, and South Dundas is going to have a bonfire, the likes of which hasn't been seen for a while.

On Sat., Jan. 4, 2025, there will be a large bonfire at the Morrisburg Beach, and fuelling the fire will be the Christmas trees that hold a place of prominence in South Dundas homes until they typically find their way to the end of the driveway, into a woodchipper, or are dumped along the side of the road somewhere on the outskirts of town.

Trees can be dropped off between Jan. 2 and Jan. 4, 2025, at designated area at the Morrisburg Beach. They will also be accepted at the Matilda Landfill site, free of charge during regular operating hours.

Hotdogs and hot chocolate will be available courtesy of the Morrisburg Lions Club (limited quantities, so get there early.)

The event, which sounds like a wonderful way to spend a couple hours on a January evening, is presented by the South Dundas Waterfront Committee, the Morrisburg and district Lions Club, and the Morrisburg Firefighters Association.

THE RECORD

SERVING STORMONT, DUNDAS AND RUSSELL COUNTIES



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Holiday Cookie campaign raising funds for the community

On Dec. 19 at 10:00 a.m. a cheque for \$2,874.59 was presented to Winchester Community Food Share by employees of Tim Hortons in Winchester, the proceeds of the Holiday Smile Cookie campaign. An equal amount was donated to the Tim Hortons camp program. From left: Tim Hortons Barb Levesque, Lynn Ross, Angie, Danis, Robin Lennox, and Community Food share Team Leader Jane Schoones.

See page 2 for the full story.

Courtesy Photo

North Dundas Senior Rockets skate away with a 9-4 win over South Stormont Mustangs

Terry Tinkess
Record Staff

LONG SAULT – It was their final game before Christmas, and the North Dundas Rockets started the celebration a bit early as they defeated the South Stormont Mustangs 9-4 on Saturday evening, Dec. 21 in Long Sault.

It wasn't pretty. The Rockets were up 2-0 after one period and 6-0 at the end of two.

Michael Mcnamee opened the scoring for the Rockets just 90 seconds in with assists going to Cody Caron and Glenden Bakker. Eric Locke made it 2-0 on the powerplay at 7:07 with Mcnamee and Caron picking up the assists.

Continued on page 3

Hiring process for new CAO approved by North Dundas Council

Terry Tinkess
Record Staff

WINCHESTER – At their regularly scheduled council meeting on Dec. 18, North Dundas Council took steps necessary to fill their vacant Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) position.

The position has been vacant since the Township and CAO Angela Rutley "parted ways" on Oct. 29, 2024.

The first item discussed was the actual job description which stressed the qualities of leadership and governance, but also the importance of relationship building, both internally and externally, and political and business acumen.

Councillor John Lennox requested that Kristen Summers, the Human Resources

Manager at the Counties SDG explain what was involved in the process and the timeline.

The process would begin with the job posting itself. We're hoping if everything gets approved this evening that the posting could be put out to all the different job boards and through social media before the end of this week, if that, of course, aligns with tonight's timeline," said Summers.

"Outside of that, there is a five-step process that we would undergo, preliminary screening, interviews at different stages, including different individuals on the panel and then ultimately, we can reach a point where we are providing a job offer, negotiating through that offer hopefully relatively quickly, including notice to the CAO's employer, allowing for

Continued on page 3



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Holiday Smile Cookie campaign brings joy to Community Food Share and Tims Camps

Terry Tinkess
Record Staff

WINCHESTER – Most coffee drinkers in Canada are very familiar with Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign and see it as a simple way to benefit local charities and also have something to munch on with your double-double.

This year Tim Hortons, in the spirit of the season, decided to try a Holiday Smile Cookie campaign. No surprise here, it did really well and for many people the cookie was in addition to what they would have normally purchased.

The various Tims outlets decided which charity they were going to support, and in Winchester the recipient was to be Community Food Share. With demand at food banks everywhere steadily increasing, the support was very much appreciated.

One thing that made the campaign special was how an army of Community Food Share volunteers chipped in to play a key role in the baking and decorating of over 3,800 cookies.

On Thurs., Dec. 19 at 10:00 a.m. there was a presentation of the proceeds from the campaign, and the community out did itself.

A total of \$2874.59 was raised for the Community Food

Share – Winchester Program, with an additional \$2874.59 going towards Tim Hortons Camps. That money was very much needed and will be greatly appreciated by those who make use of either the food bank or the camps.

Jane Schoones is the Community Food share Team Leader. She expressed the gratitude of her organization for the donation. “We cannot thank our community partner volunteers for helping with this fundraiser,” said Schoones.

Congratulations to everyone who purchased a cookie and to the businesses like Tim Hortons who make the effort to help those in the community in need.

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Upper Canada Village continues to sparkle

Members of the Friends of the Crysler Battlefield (FCFB) held their annual Christmas outing at the award-winning Alight at Night at UCV on Fri. Dec. 20. After enjoying a delicious dinner, coupled with copious amounts of hot apple cider and tea, the FCFB volunteers enjoyed strolling the streets of the village, visiting with one another and enjoying the thousands of lights which highlighted both the trees and shrubs as well as the beauty of the buildings which make up this favourite tourist location in Eastern Ontario. With a thankful heart, members of the organizations wish all near and far a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! From the left: Ashley Harper, Carol Goddard, Jim Mullins, his Mom Eleanor Sides, Gabriele Thomas, Sperry Lee, Peggy Haust St. Lawrence Parks Commission Liaison to the FCFB, FCFB President Dave Connors, Kim McInnis, Lester McInnis and Omar Somonyi.

Courtesy Photo

North Dundas Senior Rockets win

Continued from the front

The second period started slow, with recently returned Doug Harvey

scoring at 2:38 with Deric Bourdreau adding the only assist.

The floodgates opened however starting with an unassisted goal from Mcnamee at 12:06, followed by a Brodie Boulanger goal at 13:29 (assists to Shawn Moors and Harvey) and the Rockets sixth goal from

captain Derek Froats on the powerplay at 16:50 with assists going to Locke and Mcnamee.

The Mustangs tried to make a game of it in the third period, scoring three times in less than three minutes. Zachary Poirier got rid of the zero on the scoreboard at 1:50 with Kevin Hope and Justice

Brownlee assisting. Isaac Barr added the second marker while shorthanded at 3:58 with Connor Sills picking up the assist. Marc Beckstead chipped in with goal number three at 4:48 with Brendan Jacome and Barr picking up the assists.

At that point, the Rockets decided that they had had enough of that, adding three more goals of their own. (Froats from Mcnamee at 6:13, Kyle Ward from Mike Byrd and Locke at 7:32, and Ward again, a short-handed effort,

from Mitchell Gibson and Moors at 15:38.

Sills would add his second of the game for the Mustangs at 17:49 with Reid Johnston and Dillon Barr assisting.

Amazingly, shots on goal were even at 39 a piece. Cory Garrow started in goal for the Mustangs, allowing six goals on 32 shots. He was relieved late in the second by Eric Filippini who allowed three goals on seven shots. Matt Jenkins picked up the win, stopping all but four shots.

Penalties were relatively even with the Mustangs being assessed 14 minutes while the Rockets earned 12.

Michael Mcnamee, with two goals and three assists earned the first star, while Doug Harvey with a goal and an assist was second star. Zachary Poirier with a goal grabbed third star honours.

No doubt that fans from both teams will be looking forward to the rematch on Sat., Jan. 4. Game time is 2:00 p.m. in Chesterville.

Hiring process for new CAO approved

Continued from the front

approximately a month. That would bring us to end of March, March 31. That's an ideal timeline of course, we can't predict what the process would actually entail and what the needs of that individual may be but if they are relatively local and they agree to those terms, then we are anticipating a March 31 start for the position. It happens to be a Monday."

With no further questions, all voted in favour of accepting the job description.

The next item provided a job description overview and explained the process that would be followed in recruiting a new CAO. Initially the Human Resources Manager at the Counties SDG will be responsible for establishing the recruitment framework, and initial screening of candidates.

A short list of candidates will be interviewed by Council representatives and key staff members. The final decision will rest with Council, who will meet to review the final candidates' qualifications and conduct presentations to make a final

decision regarding the appointment of the new CAO.

The salary range for the position is \$140,050 - \$166,727. Applications are to be accepted up to Mon., Jan. 20, 2025. The posting will state that the salary is under review.

Councillor Matthew Uhrig provided the only comment. "I just appreciate kind of drawing this out the way we can," said Uhrig. "I think it's important to strike a balance in terms of candidates identified and then you know taking our time with this. It's leadership that is missing and is needed but I think it's one that we need to, you know, hit on the target the first time and not go down the road of maybe identifying the wrong person and then finding that out after the fact, so I think to take to stretch it out and take our time is ideal."

The question was then read by Mayor Tony Fraser. "Moved by Councillor Uhrig, seconded by Deputy Mayor Bergeron that Council approves a recruitment process for the hiring of the Chief Administrative Officer for the Township of North Dundas as presented. All those in favour, opposed, seeing none, that's carried.



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Rethinking resolutions for a better approach to New Year's goals

As the calendar flips to 2025, millions of people around the world engage in a familiar ritual: the crafting of their New Year's resolutions. The appeal of a clean slate is hard to resist, and the idea of "New Year, New Me" promises transformation and hope. Despite our best intentions, however, studies show that most resolutions are abandoned within a few weeks.

Something obviously

needs to change. Why is this cycle so common, and how can we approach self-improvement in a way that truly sticks as we head into 2025?

The tradition of New Year's resolutions dates back to ancient times, with the Babylonians and Romans making promises to their gods at the start of each year. Today, our motivations are often less spiritual but equally aspirational. Resolutions

offer a sense of control over our lives and a framework for tackling our perceived shortcomings.

For many, the act of setting resolutions is rooted in the societal pressure to "fix" ourselves and "become a better 'me.'" Diet culture, productivity trends, and social media often fuel the belief that we're not good enough as we are. This mindset can make resolutions feel more like punishments than opportunities, setting the stage for failure.

There are several reasons resolutions often fail. The most common include:

- **Overambition:** Setting overly ambitious or vague goals, like "lose 50 pounds" or "become more organized," without a clear plan.

- **Lack of Motivation:** Goals that aren't intrinsically meaningful are easy to abandon. If you're dieting because you "should" rather than because you want to, your chances of success diminish.

- **All-or-Nothing Thinking:** The "I blew it" mindset can derail progress after even minor setbacks.

- **Unrealistic Timing:** Expecting overnight success ignores the reality that meaningful change takes time and effort.

Instead of setting rigid resolutions that often lead to frustration, consider reframing your approach to self-improvement. Here are some alternative strategies:

1. Question what you want to change and why it matters.

Before committing to any goal, ask yourself: Why do I want this? Is it because it aligns with my values, or because I feel external pressure? Understanding your motivations is crucial to staying committed.

For example, instead of resolving to "earn more money," dig a little deeper into the question. Do you

want financial security to reduce stress, or are you seeking validation through material success? Clarifying your reasons can help you set goals that are personally meaningful.

2. Focus on Systems, Not Outcomes

As James Clear, author of *Atomic Habits*, emphasizes, success comes from building systems, not chasing results. Instead of aiming to "write a book," commit to writing for 30 minutes each day. By focusing on the process rather than the end goal, you're more likely to develop sustainable habits.

3. Expand Your Definition of Self-Improvement

Resolutions often focus on tangible achievements, like losing weight or earning a promotion. But what about less obvious areas of growth? Consider goals that nurture your emotional, social, or intellectual well-being, such as:

- **Building Emotional Resilience:** Practice mindfulness or journaling to better understand your emotions.

- **Strengthening Relationships:** Commit to reaching out to a friend or family member once a week.

- **Expanding Your Horizons:** Learn a new skill or explore a creative hobby without worrying about mastery.

4. Start Small and Celebrate Progress

Breaking big goals into smaller, manageable steps increases the likelihood of success. If your goal is to get fit, start with a 10-minute walk three times a week rather than committing to an hour at the gym every day. Celebrating small wins along the way keeps you motivated and reinforces positive habits.

5. Embrace Failure as Part of the Process

Failure is inevitable, but it doesn't mean you've failed entirely. Each misstep is an opportunity to learn and adjust. If you miss a workout or overindulge, reflect on why it happened and how you can adapt rather than giving up entirely.

When considering changes for the new year, think beyond the typical resolutions. There are many unconventional areas that can be explored, such as conducting an audit on your digital life. You could declutter your email inbox, set boundaries around screen time and unfollow accounts that don't bring you joy.

Giving back to your community is always a good idea. Volunteering not only benefits others but also provides a sense of purpose and connection.

How about ramping-up your curiosity? Commit to asking more questions and

seeking out new perspectives, whether through books, podcasts, or conversations.

Do you have trouble focusing or relaxing? Try decluttering your mind. Practice saying "no" to commitments that don't align with your priorities and that cause you more stress than satisfaction.

Very important but often overlooked is allowing yourself time to rest. Prioritize sleep and downtime as essential components of a healthy, productive life. Being well rested might make other concerns a little less daunting.

As we approach 2025, let's move beyond the cycle of making and breaking resolutions. Focus on cultivating habits and systems that align with your values and bring genuine fulfilment. Question the "why" behind your goals, embrace incremental progress, and remember that self-improvement isn't about fixing what's "wrong" with you - it's about building on what's already right.

The new year is a chance to grow, explore, and enrich your life in meaningful ways. By approaching your goals with curiosity, compassion, and intention, you'll set the stage for a year, and a self, that's truly worth celebrating.

Terry Tinkess

TAGWI Report

By Talia Crooke
Student Reporter



A week with the Warriors

T'was the week before winter break and our Warriors were full of holiday spirit!

Our week started with members of last year's graduating class returning for a graduate breakfast where they shared stories from their first semester post-secondary school and gave advice to our upcoming graduates.

The Intermediate hockey team held their classic winter tournament on Tuesday where they played against schools in our area and showed off their skills and determination!

Prom committee held a bake sale where they raised over \$600 to go towards their prom! Thank you to everyone who donated baked goods and bought something at the bake sale.

Students in the Health and Wellness SHSM took a trip to Queen's University so they could see the Anatomy Learning Centre where students had the chance to study cadaveric specimens. Students also got a tour of the university campus and a chance to learn about Queen's as a university.

To spread some holiday cheer, some of our students visited the Winchester Golden Years Centre's annual Christmas dinner, where they performed Christmas carols. Our intermediate Difference Makers club also made 500 Christmas cards for the seniors in our community.

On Friday, our students had a blast participating in the Christmas pep rally hosted by student council! The pep rally consisted of Christmas themed games, Family Feud, and a polar bear dip for the teacher and student pair who raised the most money for our food drive where we collected over 250 cans!

As always, follow our school's Facebook and Instagram page for more updates on the school's activities. Happy Holidays!



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2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

January 2024

Helping to fill shelves at food pantry

CHESTERVILLE – Church members and community volunteers gathered at Christ Church United in Chesterville to pack, sort and refill the shelves at the Faith Food Pantry located there.

As firefighters from North Dundas Fire Station #4 drove Santa and Mrs. Claus through the streets of Chesterville on Christmas Eve, 1,240 pounds of food and \$500 in cash were received by firefighters. Included in the total were donations collected at the Mike Dean Local Grocer store in Chesterville.

“I was overwhelmed by the generosity of the people of Chesterville” said Station 4 Fire Chief Mike Gruich as church members and community volunteers unpacked, sorted and filled the shelves of the food pantry.

“We collected goods at the store front in Chesterville and our cashiers are the ones who promoted it very well by letting the community know this donation was local to just here in Chesterville via the church.” explained Gordon Dean. He noted how two “heaping carts of groceries” collected in a couple of days, before commenting how “it was a great success, and we are looking forward to doing the same next year!”

Iroquois and District Business Group presents cheque to Dundas County Hospice

IROQUOIS – With light snow falling, a precursor of a winter storm that was on the way, a few of people who help make Iroquois the generous community it is, gathered to present the proceeds of a couple of their efforts to Arnold Scheeder, chair, of the Dundas County Hospice board of directors.

Earlier in December, The Iroquois Plaza was a hive of activity. In the morning there was a cookie crawl. A cookie crawl, if you didn’t know, works like this: You purchase a nice, seasonally decorated box in which to place your cookies, and then visit the various local merchants, each of which has a different cookie on offer.

It was a great idea that worked well, according to Candace Latulippe, the owner of River Rat Treasures, Candy’s Hair Salon, and The Travel Experts, one of the organizers. “It’s a fundraiser that works well for everyone. “It gets people in the stores,” said Latulippe at the time. “And it supports a local charity and there’s no better charity than Dundas County Hospice.”

Later that same day a Christmas Night Market took place at the plaza with among other things, local vendors, horse drawn wagon rides, carolers, the Seaway District High School Band, and several Christmas trees that had been decorated by local businesses and organizations.

Combined with the proceeds of the cookie crawl, it allowed the Iroquois and District Business Group to present a cheque in the amount of \$1,120 to the Dundas County Hospice.

North Dundas secures first place in senior boys basketball

CHESTERVILLE – The North Dundas District High School (NDDHS) Devils senior boys’ basketball team locked up first place and the right to host playoffs with a gritty 57-51 win over the Holy Trinity Falcons Monday afternoon in Chesterville.

In many ways, North Dundas is overachieving: They are an “A” school, and in many cases they are playing against “AA” schools. “We are very, very happy to be undefeated with a single “A” school,” said Coach Jevon Groves, “So that’s always a big accomplishment, especially for North Dundas. It’s been a while since our senior boys have won and have been in first place in SDG.

As a coach, you don’t want your team to get ahead of itself. You deal with the team on the floor with you and worry about the next game once you’ve finished this one. Still, with EOSSA (Eastern Ontario Secondary School Association) senior boys’ basketball being hosted by North Dundas, they must at least have thought about it, right?

“It would be nice,” said Groves. “Like that was kind of our goal for the year, and we kind of set a couple of short-term ones as well, like end up first in SDG, and get to host SDG. Hopefully we can play as well as we did today and have a chance to win SDG, and to be in EOSSA with it being here. That’s always a risk when you host it because you may not necessarily be in it.”

Stormont County 4-H holds AGM

CHESTERVILLE – The 2024 Annual General Meeting of the Stormont County 4H Association was held via zoom on Jan. 17. Over 20 members of the association attended

the event which was opened by the 4-H pledge following a welcome from Neil Robinson. Lyndsay Berry, the Volunteer Support Coordinator for Region 2, provided information on upcoming events and opportunities for members as well providing information on several topics of interest.

Neil Robinson thanked all the volunteers who helped make 2023 a successful year for Stormont County 4H, with Alyssa Waldroff and Jakob Vogel echoing these remarks. Several reports were provided during the meeting which attested to work done by volunteers and 4H members during the year.

The 2024 executive is as follows: Past President: Neil Robinson; President: Alyssa Waldroff; Vice-President: Jakob Vogel; Secretary: Neil Robinson; Treasurer: Kristina Stewart; Association Representative: Jennifer Waldroff; Judging Coordinator: Donna MacDonald; Awards Coordinator: Kristina Stewart; Volunteer Screening Committee: Lill Smith, Betty Morrow and Susanna Bretzler; Membership Coordinator: Kristina Stewart; Livestock Coordinator: Henrietta Bretzler; Webmaster: Barbara-Ann Glaude; Social Media: Sarah Nuttall; Region 2 Representatives: Denise Beaudette-Manley, Cassidy Smith and Leith Symon.

2024 draft budget presented to South Dundas Council

MORRISBURG – The 2024 draft budget was presented to South Dundas Council at special meetings held on Jan. 15 and 16, 2024. In South Dundas, as in most municipalities, budget is formalized in the early part of the new year and acts as a guide going forward determining how much money the Municipality will bring in and spend within the year. As a result, it determines the level of service provided to South Dundas residents and guides decisions on spending, while keeping inflation and uncertainty in mind.

While the budget is still considered as a draft, it will be formally approved at the Feb. 14 Council meeting. Here are a few details contained in the draft budget.

A 2024 residential tax bill, assuming the average assessment of \$211,148, will be \$135.26 (4.83%) higher than 2023. Of those annual taxes of \$2,932.81, 43.1 per cent stays with South Dundas with the remainder being remitted to SDG and the local school boards.

In terms of capital items, the 2024 capital program is budgeted at \$4.56M, which includes:

- Resurfacing of eight (8) roads
- Sidewalk Replacement
- Haldane Park Refurbishment
- Iroquois Pathway Lighting
- New Fire Pumper
- New Plow Truck
- New Backhoe

February 2024


Greely winter carnival succeeds despite mild weather

GREELY – The unpredictability of the weather has made it difficult to plan a winter carnival in the past few years, but some groups like the Greely Community Association have figured out that you don’t have to rely on outdoor events to have a great time.

That was evident last weekend as several community groups joined together to make sure that everyone had a great time.

Isabelle Skalski is the President of the Greely Community Association (GCA), and she was busy on the serving line Sunday morning helping to make sure that everyone who came out for brunch went back to their seat with a very full plate.


Continued on page 8



Church DIRECTORY


Your Guide to Local Houses of Worship

ALL SERVICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

The United Church of Canada CHRIST CHURCH UNITED 

5 Casselman St., Chesterville
Office Ph.: 613-448-2532 Email: ccuchesterville@gmail.com
MINISTER: Rev. Blair R. Paterson, B.A., M.Div.

Join us Sundays at 10:30 a.m. for our weekly worship service.
Sunday School at 10:30 a.m.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA AVONMORE-FINCH-MARTINTOWN ST. JAMES - CHALMERS - ST. ANDREW'S 


PASTORAL CHARGE Minister: Rev. Lois Gaudet BBA, BTh, MDiv
Contact: Tel: 613-346-1648 Email: revlgaudet@gmail.com

January 5th, 2025 – Worship with Rev. Lois at 9:15 a.m. St. James Avonmore and 11 a.m. at Chalmers Finch.


ST. LUKE'S-KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Finch) ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Avonmore) ST. JAMES-ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Gravel Hill)

INTERIM MODERATOR: Rev. Robert Adams
Email: minister@stjohnscornwall.ca www.avonmorefinch-presbyterian.ca
Office Phone: 613-932-8693

January 5th, 2025 – Donna McIvreen
Services for the month of January will be held at St. Luke's-Knox in Finch at 10:30 a.m. (no services in Avonmore).

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - Morewood ST. ANDREW'S - Chesterville ST. PAUL'S - Winchester 


Minister: Rev. Ed Charlton Email: edcharlton12@gmail.com
Service Times: St. Andrews Chesterville at 9 a.m., St. Paul's Winchester at 10 a.m., and Morewood Presbyterian Church at 11:15 a.m.

NATIONSIDE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH 

Pastor Scott Sayers
E-mail: Pastor.Scott@mail.com Office: 613-448-2272

Please join us for Sunday Services at 10:30 a.m. at the Nelson LaPrade Centre, 9 William St.

Services also online on Facebook under "The Nation" Nativeside Pentecostal Church.
Affiliated with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada


HARMONY COMMUNITY CHURCH 

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12010 Ormond Rd. & Hwy. 31 (North of Winchester)
Office phone: 613-774-5170 www.harmony-church.org
We are an air conditioned and handicap accessible building.
Senior Pastor: Rev. Daniel Wallace

Weekly Services – Sunday at 10:30 a.m. & 7 p.m.
Wednesdays at 7 p.m. – Prayer Meeting


We are open and invite you to join us for services! We are continuing to live stream our Sunday morning services at Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoPyDABz4REc-A76-EvrA>
Sunday School Classes & Nursery have resumed.

Please contact the church office for information on mid-week meetings or any other questions.

ST. MARY'S ANGLICAN CHURCH 

139 Castor St., Russell, ON Parish Office: 613-445-3226
Presiding: Rev. Anne Quick
infostmarysrussell@rogers.com Website: www.stmarysrussell.ca

Sunday Service:
Holy Eucharist and Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.
You can phone or e-mail the church for the invitation to attend worship via Zoom.
St. Mary's Church is engaged in actively sharing God's unconditional grace and love.

THE GATHERING HOUSE CHESTERVILLE 

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2 Water St., Chesterville 613-448-1758
Pastor Shawn Van De Visch

Join us at www.thegatheringhouse.ca on Sunday mornings beginning at 10 a.m. for our weekly worship service. Nursery and Sunday School classes have resumed.

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613-774-2236 www.stclaresanglican.ca 2530 Falcone Lane, Winchester

Sunday Service of Eucharist, 10 A.M.

Visit us online for Sunday Service at our links below.
On Facebook at The Anglican Parish of North Dundas at St. Clare's.
On YouTube at St. Clare Anglican.

ST. ANDREW'S AND ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

38 Mill Street, Russell, ON 613-445-3111 www.russellunited.org
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Fr. Oliver Wekesa (Parish Administrator)
Cindy Morgan (Parish Secretary)

In Memoriam

Linda Darlene Windsor nee Helmer
September 12, 1945 - December 29, 2016

December 29, 2016 at 8:15 p.m. at the Ottawa General Hospital you left us with so many happy memories.

Trips, homemade Chinese food, the greatest love of family.

We truly miss you so much, Thanks for the memories.

And, most of all, your love you gave us.



Love Now & Forever
Earl L. Windsor,
your children & grandchildren

MATCH GAME

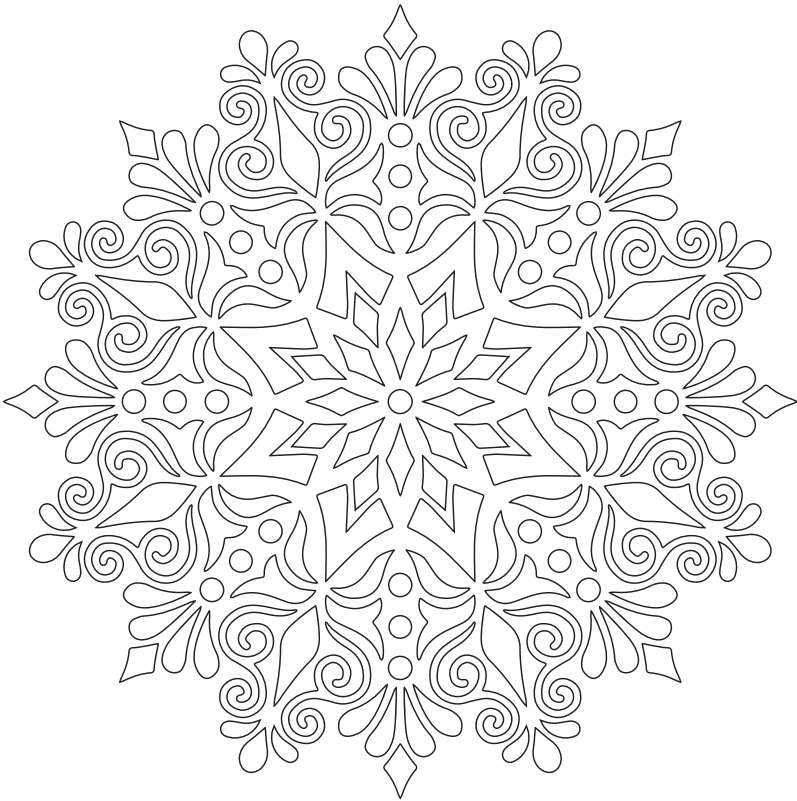
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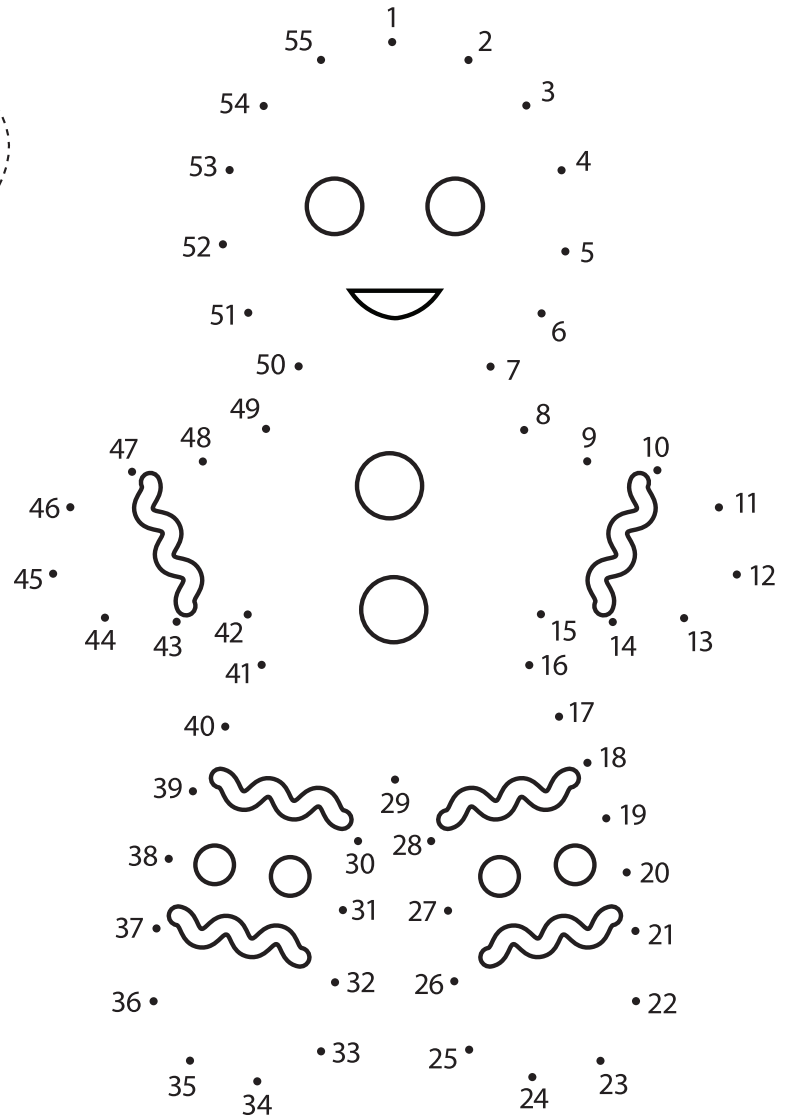
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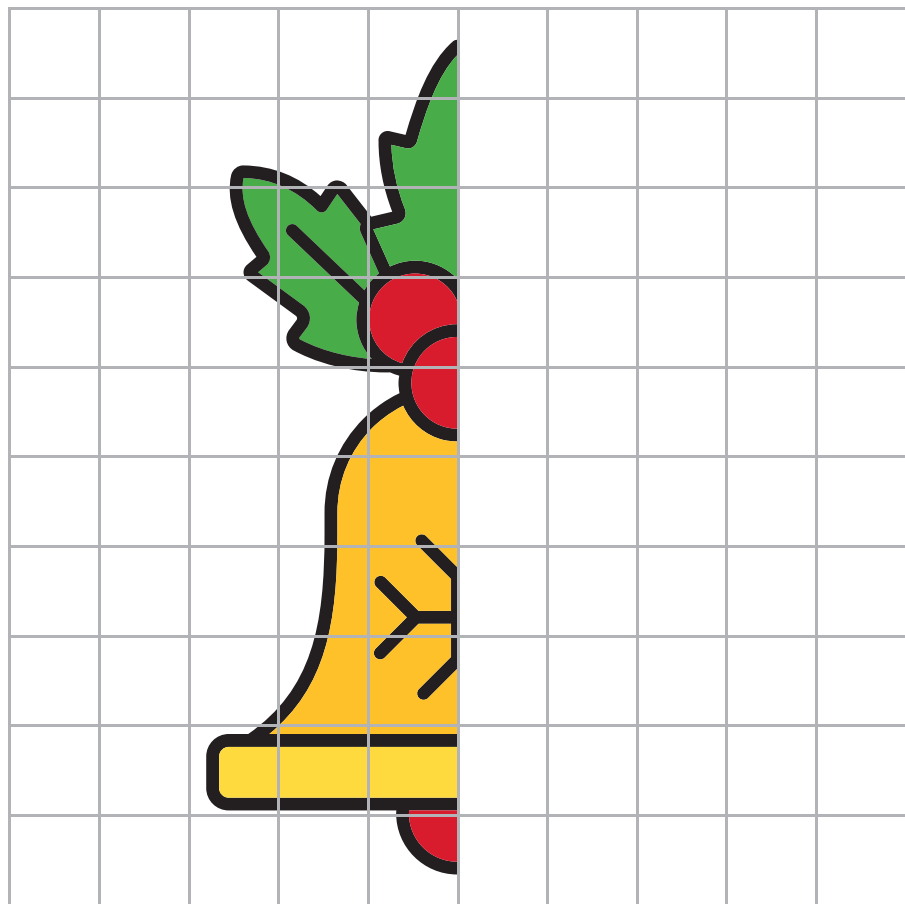


DOT TO DOT



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DRAW THE MIRROR IMAGE OF THE PICTURE YOU SEE



Babies of 2024

Owen Lawrence Marsolais



March 20, 2024

Son of Paige and Chris Marsolais.



SPOT THE 5 DIFFERENCES



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COMING EVENTS FOR JANUARY 2025
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www.carefor.ca LIKE us on Facebook **f**

Nor-Dun Centre, Winchester Site Cost: Senior \$9, Non-Senior \$11
Diners' Meals: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday. You must call to reserve your meal.

Wed., Jan. 1	Carefor NorDun Centre - Closed
Fri., Jan. 3	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Fish Burgers - New Years Resolutions
Mon., Jan. 6	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Pork Ribs
Tues., Jan. 7	Footcare Clinic. Call to book your appointment.
Tues., Jan. 7	Chesterville Diners at Nelson LaPrade - Chili and a Bun
Tues., Jan. 7	2 p.m. Bingo - Come and enjoy some fun playing Bingo
Wed., Jan. 8	Footcare Clinic. Call to book your appointment.
Wed., Jan. 8	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Tuscan Chicken- My Chart Presentation
Wed., Jan. 8	1:30 p.m. Caregiver Tools
Thurs., Jan. 9	Winchester Diners Drive Thru - Chili and a Bun
Thurs., Jan. 9	1:30 p.m. Parkinson's Coffee
Fri., Jan. 10	Health & Wellness in Winchester. Call to book your appointment.
Fri., Jan. 10	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Tomato Soup and Grilled Cheese - Celebrate Soup Day
Mon., Jan. 13	Health & Wellness in Chesterville. Call to book your appointment.
Mon., Jan. 13	11:30 a.m. Lunch - Taco Bake
Tues., Jan. 14	Health & Wellness Clinic in South Mountain. Call for an appointment.
Tues., Jan. 14	Footcare Clinic. Call to book your appointment.
Tues., Jan. 14	11:30 a.m. South Mountain Diners at South Mountain Ag Hall - Meat Loaf - Spencer Scharf Music
Wed., Jan. 15	Footcare Clinic. Call to book your appointment.
Wed., Jan. 15	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Ham and Cheese Casserole - Wacky Winter Wardrobe Wednesday
Wed., Jan. 15	1:30 p.m. All in a Day Audio Book Club
Thurs., Jan. 16	Winchester Diners Drive Thru & Wellings Clubhouse Pick up - Meatloaf
Fri., Jan. 17	9 a.m. Breakfast
Mon., Jan. 20	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Crunchy Perch - Blue Monday
Tues., Jan. 21	Footcare Clinic. Call to book appointment.
Tues., Jan. 21	11:30 a.m. Chesterville at Nelson LaPrade - Chicken Cacciatore - Green Food Box Presentation
Tues., Jan. 21	2 p.m. Bingo - Come and enjoy some fun playing Bingo
Wed., Jan. 22	Footcare Clinic. Call to book your appointment.
Wed., Jan. 22	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Spinach & Cheese Cannelloni - History in your Lifetime
Wed., Jan. 22	1:30 p.m. Caregiver Café. Call for more information.
Thurs., Jan. 23	Winchester Diners Drive Thru - Chicken Cacciatore
Fri., Jan. 24	Health & Wellness in Winchester. Call to book your appointment.
Fri., Jan. 24	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Beef Stew - Celebrate Robbie Burns Day
Mon., Jan. 27	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Chicken a La King
Mon., Jan. 27	1:30 p.m. One on One Caregiver Support. Call for more information.
Tues., Jan. 28	Footcare Clinic. Call to book appointment.
Tues., Jan. 28	11:30 a.m. South Mountain Diners at South Mountain Ag Hall - Chicken Alfredo Lasagna - Green Food Box Presentation
Wed., Jan. 29	Footcare Clinic. Call to book your appointment.
Wed., Jan. 29	11:30 a.m. Lunch: Chinese Food - Chines New Year
Wed., Jan. 29	1:30 p.m. Winter Craft
Thurs., Jan. 30	Winchester Diners Drive Thru & Wellings Clubhouse Pick up - Meatloaf
Fri., Jan. 31	11:30 a.m. Lunch: French Onion Pork Chops - Birthday Celebration

Senior Fitness Class - Every Monday at 1:30 p.m. **Coffee Time** at 9 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday & Friday. **Tai Chi** at 11:15 a.m. every Tuesday. **Chair Yoga** every Tuesday at 10 a.m. with Dawn. **Finish the Stitch Group** every Thursday at 9:30 a.m. **Chair Yoga** at 1:30 p.m. every Friday with Janet.

Please call if you plan to attend any of these activities.
 Pick up a monthly newsletter at the office for more information about our activities.
 For more information please call us at 613-774-6109 and press 0.

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Continued from page 5

"It would be nice if the weather would cooperate," said Skalski," but we know you can still have a good time without the outdoor activities. It's just nice to give people a chance to get together, especially in winter when you become somewhat isolated."

People seemed happy to have a chance to sit down and talk with each other on Sunday morning. In addition to the excellent brunch, there were balloons for the kids, and the Vernon Ukulele Players to provide musical entertainment. The Greely Lions handled the cooking with all proceeds going to the Greely Community Association.

Ottawa Councillor for Osgoode ward and Lions Club fundraising chair George Darouze makes a point of getting to as many local events as possible, because he believes that a community is what you make of it. "When I first moved here, I discovered how active a community it was. It's easy to become involved."

There are probably some Greely Community Association members thinking about next year and how to make it even better. The weather though, won't be a concern because they know the big attraction is the people.

Chesterville and District Agricultural Society holds AGM

CHESTERVILLE – There was a good turnout for the 2024 annual general meeting of the Chesterville & District Agricultural Society at the Nelson LaPrade Centre in Chesterville.

CDAS President Ann Vanderlind opened the meeting by thanking the 2023 CDAS board of Directors for their work over the past year. Highlights of the past year included a lot of maintenance done at the fairgrounds, renovations of the agricultural hall and of course the 2023 Chesterville Fair. "The fair was a tremendous success" commented Vanderlind, noting the re-introduction of the cattle and sheep shows at the fair was well received. After mentioning the grandstand would be undergoing some needed maintenance in 2024, she wished everyone a successful year and fair.

Following a review of the financials from 2023, elections for the 2024 board of directors was held. Nominated for a director's position on the board were: Peter Vanderlind, Cheyanne Pyle, Darren Cooper, Nancy Cooper, Ann Vanderlind, Cindy Barkley, Hannah van Moorsel, Sabrina Parent, Kim Link and Carol Johnson will serve as Directors for the CDAS, with Justin Vanderlind and Brad Johnston serving as associate directors. Ann Vanderlind will be the CDAS president, Nancy Cooper will serve as vice-president, Amber McNamara is CDAS treasurer.

It was announced during the meeting that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police will be performing at the 2024 Chesterville Fair during the afternoon of Aug. 25, the final day of the fair. More information will be upcoming.

North Dundas Council receives 2024 budget first draft

WINCHESTER – At their regularly scheduled meeting on Feb. 1, 2024, North Dundas Council were presented with the first draft of the 2024 budget. It appears they have some hard work and difficult decisions ahead of them as they try to minimize a rate increase as much as possible during these difficult economic times.

As indicated in the draft, revenues for 2024 are predicted to be \$13,209,165, while expenditures are listed as \$22,774,228, a difference, or budget levy of \$9,565,063. This is an increase of \$1,327,354, or 16.1 per cent over 2023.

While increases were expected in most areas simply due to rising prices, two area were particularly worthy of notice. Transportation services had a levy ask of \$3,596,568, which is 37.6 per cent of the overall levy, yet this is only an increase of 4.4 per cent over the previous year's budget.

Recreation Services is requesting \$2,406,847, an increase of \$286,890, or 13.5 per cent over 2023.

Overall, Public Works and Recreation account for \$6,003,415, or 62.8 per cent of the net taxation levy.

Insurance premiums were a major driver of operational increases. Premium for 2024 are up 40 per cent over 2023, which was up 52 per cent over 2022, which was up 50 per cent over 2021. North Dundas has budgeted for a total premium of \$926,000, which is 11.2 per cent of last year's taxation levy. It is worth noting that in 2019 the Township's premiums were \$174,000, producing an increase to date of \$752,000 or 432 per cent.

Charges laid after Stormont, Dundas and South Glengarry MP Eric Duncan threatened

CORNWALL – A 28-year-old man charged with uttering a death threat to Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry MP Eric Duncan last month was released from custody on Feb. 1 after a bail hearing in Cornwall court, less than four months after being charged with threatening to kill the prime minister. The accused was released from custody on consent after a hearing held before the Ontario Justice of the Peace Sylvie-Emanuelle Bourbonnais, on a \$500 bond that includes the conditions he report to the John Howard Society's bail-supervision program before Feb. 5, reside at an address approved by the bail-supervision program, not contact or communicate with Duncan or Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in any way, not be within 100 metres of any location where either could be, and not possess any weapons.

The accused had been charged by Cornwall police with uttering a death threat to Duncan by phone on Jan. 7. He was arrested by police on Jan. 31 and held in police custody until the bail hearing held on Feb. 1.

It's the second time he was released after being charged with uttering threats.

Duncan issued a statement about the closure Wednesday, referring only to a "serious security issue" that led to the closure decision, and specifying he wouldn't offer any further comment on the matter. His satellite constituency offices in Winchester and Morrisburg remain open during their scheduled hours, as does his office on Parliament Hill.

New play structure in Newington thanks to Ontario Trillium Fund grant

LONG SAULT – In November 2023 a new play structure was installed in Newington's Lloyd Hawn Park to replace an aging play structure. Stormont, Dundas and South Glengarry MPP Nolan Quinn met with South Stormont representatives to recognize the \$49,300 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) for this project on Tuesday February 6.

The Lloyd Hawn Park play structure had been determined to need replacement within five years in the 2020 Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the municipality. In the fall of 2023, the old structure was removed by the Township to make room for the replacement play structure.

"I am pleased to hear about the Township of South Stormont receiving the funding through the OTF Capital grant for the needed replacement of the play structure at Lloyd Hawn Park," Quinn before continuing "This will allow the community to enjoy a new addition to the park in Newington. Having a new, modern, and safe play structure will serve the community well for many years."

"We were delighted and grateful when we heard our

application received OTF funding. There was some community input when selecting the design and there has been positive feedback with the structure that was installed. The community can enjoy a refreshed and updated park in the north end of our Township" commented South Stormont Mayor Bryan McGillis.

Denise Beaudette-Manley, community volunteer and advocate for the project, explained prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the Ladies Auxiliary of the Newington Fire Department had investigated the installation of "small stand-alone features for the park such as a four-arm rocking structure." This initiative would be supported the organization's fall supper and money raised through the sale of snacks at the rink house, but the pandemic caused the fundraising events to be cancelled. She mentioned further fundraising events are in the planning stage presently.

"I cannot stress enough how important Kevin Amelotte and his team are in supporting Newington's initiatives. They did all of the work to get the grant. I just looked over options with other community members and let them know which we wanted." said Beaudette-Manley in a message to The Record.

Hoople Creek Ice Fishing Derby a resounding success

INGLESIDE – Despite some unusually warm weather in the preceding two weeks, the Second annual Hoople Creek ice fishing "fun" tournament went off without a hitch on Sat., Feb. 17, on Hoople Bay in Ingleside, Ontario.

The tournament, organized by The Friends of Hoople Creek Society, and well supported by several local businesses, had 111 anglers who spent the morning trying to pull the biggest Walleye, Pike or Perch out of their hole in the ice.

The organizers couldn't have asked for a better day, and while the wind made things a bit chilly out on the ice, the bright sun and sense of camaraderie among the anglers and their friends and family made it a day no one would have wanted to miss.

Travis Read was the tournament director. He says he has received a lot of positive feedback. "The feedback from the anglers that participated is that it was very well organised, and they can't wait till next year," said Read. "It went exceptionally well, and we were pleased with how patient the anglers all were with us."

There's little doubt that the tournament organizers as well as all the participants were grateful for the change in the weather leading up to the tournament. "One thing we're lucky with Hoople Bay, is as long as you have a few cold days of like minus 13, minus 16, you're going to have 8-10 inches of ice in like a week," added Read.

Next year the tournament will again be planned around a similar date. "We like to keep it around the same day because it makes it easier for entire families to participate like happened this year," said Read.

Continued on page 9



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WEEKLY EVENTS

Monday - Friday	8:15 a.m. – Coffee Time
Wednesdays	10 a.m. – Chair Yoga / Fitness. \$7 per class
Wednesdays	10:45 a.m. – BINGO!
Fridays	1:30 p.m. – Cards & Games

DINERS (12 P.M., \$9)

Fri., Jan. 3	"Welcome 2025" Menu: Loaded potato soup, ham and swiss sliders, dessert
Fri., Jan. 17	"Cups and Conversation" Bring your favourite mug to lunch! Menu: Tourtière, glazed carrots, dessert
Fri., Jan. 24	"Lunar New Year Celebration" Followed by Ontario Dental Plan Presentation. Menu: Honey garlic ribs, chow mein, egg rolls, chicken balls, rice pudding
Fri., Jan. 31	Menu: Alfredo chicken parm, roasted vegetables, coconut cream pie

BREAKFAST DINER (8:30 A.M., \$7)

Fri., Jan. 10 Scrambled eggs, peameal bacon, homefries, toast, coffee/tea/juice

PROGRAMS

Thurs., Jan. 2	2 p.m. – Sip & Chat
Mon. Jan. 6	1 p.m. – Movie Matinee: "Fun with Dick and Jane"
Tues., Jan. 7	1:30 p.m. – Tranquil Tuesday: Colour and Unwind
Thurs., Jan. 9	10 a.m. – Thursday Reflections with Pastor Scott
Tues., Jan. 14	1:30 p.m. – Snowflake Social
Thurs., Jan. 16	2 p.m. – Sip & Chat
Mon., Jan. 20	1 p.m. – Movie Matinee: "Hidden Figures"
Tues., Jan. 21	1:30 p.m. – Travel Tuesday: "China"
Thurs., Jan. 23	1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. – Euchre
Tues., Jan. 28	11:30 a.m. – Step-by-Step Painting and Lunch – \$10
Thurs., Jan. 30	11 a.m. – Trivia Hour Thursday

HOLIDAY CLOSURE NOTICE:
We are closed on January 1 and will reopen on January 2 at 8 am.
Please note that there have been changes to program dates and times.

Please phone us at 613-984-2436 or email csayers@carefor.ca or mcuerrier@carefor.ca if you wish to attend any events.



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2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

Continued from page 8

Possible removal of question period during Russell Council meetings

EMBRUN – The decision to consider removing question period from Russell Township Council meetings has apparently struck a nerve with several residents, and this has led to the distribution of materials (a flyer) throughout the community. The flyer refers to the proposed amendments to Council's Procedural By-law #2021-127.

The existence of these materials was addressed directly through a media release from Council and administration on Thurs., Feb. 22, 2024, stating that "The Russell Township Council and administration are aware of

materials being distributed in our community that do not fully represent the complexities or the intent behind the proposed amendments to Council's Procedural By-law #2021-127."

The release goes on to clarify that no final decision has been made regarding changes to the public's ability to ask questions during open meetings. Residents were encouraged to attend meetings, review agendas, and engage with the local government process, including interaction with Council members and staff through various means, including email, phone, and in-person meetings, as well as through delegations, written communications, and special meetings as necessary.

While they are open and willing to listen to feedback and open discussions with Township residents in the proper forum, there is an expectation that a certain decorum must be followed.

Further Council and staff interactions are scheduled at the upcoming Council meeting on February 26, where further dialogue on this issue is expected to take place.

A busy, fun-filled year for the Chesterville and District Historical Society

CHESTERVILLE – 2023 was a busy year for members of the Chesterville & District Historical Society (CDHS).

During the Annual General Meeting of the CDHS held at the Heritage Centre on Tues., Feb. 20, President Caroline Roberts provided an overview of event. In her 2023 report, Roberts noted regular in-person meetings at the Heritage Centre resumed after the revitalization of the Heritage Centre was completed.

On June 3 an official re-opening of the building was held and well attended. She noted members of the Society had spent hours ensuring exhibits were ready for viewing by those who dropped in for the event. Students from Chesterville Public School and St. Mary Catholic School and were able to learn about the history of the community from members. Russell Historical Society and Dalkeith Historical Society visited the Heritage Centre, as well as members of a vintage car club.

After being thanked for her work by Roberts, CDHS Secretary Kim McInnis provided an overview of the genealogical and historical research she has undertaken for people on behalf of the CDHS during the year.

Elections for the 2023 Executive were held following a discussion on the revision of the CDHS by-law. Caroline Roberts will be the CDHS President, Gerry Johnson as Vice President, Kim McInnis serving as Secretary, and Verne McMillan as Treasurer.

JANUARY IS

Alzheimer's Awareness Month

HOPE IN EVERY MEMORY



Alzheimer's: recognize the early signs

According to the Alzheimer Society, 733,040 people in Canada are living with a neurocognitive disorder as of January 1, 2024. No reliable treatment exists for most of these disorders, but early diagnosis is crucial for people with dementia to maintain independence and quality of life for as long as possible.

This January, in recognition of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, learn to spot the early signs of this chronic neurodegenerative disease:

- Short-term memory loss, such as not remembering what you had for lunch
- Difficulty finding the right words in conversation or replacing words with others
- Struggling with familiar tasks like cooking
- Getting lost in familiar places
- Having trouble concentrating and learning things
- Making illogical decisions, such as dressing inappropriately for the weather
- Misplacing objects or putting them in strange places

- Losing interest in activities you used to love
- Sudden, unexplained mood swings, such as crying, getting angry or feeling fearful

If you or someone you know is experiencing these symptoms, speak with a healthcare professional. Tests and exams are available to determine whether it's Alzheimer's disease or another neurocognitive disorder.

For more information, visit the Alzheimer Society of Canada online at alzheimer.ca/en.



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Studio 138, Learning for the future

SD&G – In larger communities it has been common to see partnerships formed between local industry and schools of all levels. Today however, can happen anywhere, and the partnership between Studio 138 and North Dundas District High School (NDDHS) is a good example. That partnership is getting a big boost this holiday season, with a \$45,000 grant from The Commonwell Mutual Insurance Group's Learning Engagement & Accelerator Fund (L.E.A.F.), to expand their Design for Agro focused technology learning for high school students.

"We're excited to grow our programming and empower students to become creative problem solvers prepared for industry," said Scott Currie, Design Instructor. "Students in rural Eastern Ontario don't often get access to these advanced programs, so to be able to expand thanks to this grant is something special."

Currie received a Trustee Innovation award from the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) in June of this year for "his exceptional contributions to integrating STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) technology at his school. His dedication and expertise led to the creation of Studio 138, a design, modelling, and printing studio at the school. Scott secured donations from industry leaders like Wacom, Stratasys, and Sphero, resulting in a class set of drawing tablets, an industry-grade 3-D printer, and coding robots. Additionally, he organized a STEM day for Engineering Month. His efforts have not only enhanced the school's current STEM offerings but also laid the groundwork for future program expansion." (From the UCDSB website.)

According to the media release



SMALL BUSINESS Spotlight



In agriculture, many pieces of equipment have a very long life span, but sourcing replacement parts becomes more difficult the older the machine. Through technologies like 3D printing and high resolution scanning, replacement parts can often be fabricated.

Courtesy Photo

announcing the grant, Studio 138 focuses on leading edge technology. It is a studio that sparks curiosity but also instils a sense of confidence and passion for design & exploration, according to Currie. "By immersing them in real-world applications through STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math), AI & Design Process, we can empower these students to become future innovators, creative problem solvers who are truly skilled entrepreneurs that are ready for industry."

Through this studio within the high school, students can explore STEM/STEAM related pathways, such as 3d

modelling, graphics, 3d printing, manufacturing, design process, material applications, product design, digital conceptual drawing, prototyping, and entrepreneurship.

In supporting the grant application North Dundas Mayor Tony Fraser identified the importance of education that will provide real world opportunities for students.

"Having a STEM focused component to the high school curriculum will expose students to a wealth of employment opportunities they may never have known even existed," said Fraser. By using industry grade software and hardware in

our schools, specifically at Studio 138, the connection between real world education and real-world careers will be made for students and launch them on an exciting and rewarding career path. This is made even more critical, as such classes are not part of the standard curriculum."

The grant is administered by The Commonwell Mutual Insurance Group, and in 2024 the program invested \$400,000 in grants, scaling from previous years. Tim Shauf, President of The Commonwell, emphasizes the program's impact, stating, "We received over \$3.7 million in funding requests this year, highlighting its crucial role in supporting communities.

"Our L.E.A.F grants are about caring beyond us, and beyond now," Shauf added.

The fund's mission is simple: cultivate community resilience and capacity through program development and facility/resource upgrades in places where residents learn, play, engage, and gather.

In addition to Design for Agro, a L.E.A.F. grant was also made to Cornwall's Beyond 21 STEM Explorers, a community-centred initiative designed to provide adults with developmental disabilities, as well as youth (18+), with access to an engaging, hands-on environment for exploring Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

In previous years, a Commonwell L.E.A.F grant was directed to an Alexandria skate park expansion, a community park concrete pad in Avonmore, and resurfacing of the Glen Walter regional park tennis court.

It is not the type of training you would typically find at a rural high school. Maybe that's the point, to prove you can get "there" from "here."

If you would like to have a light shined on your business, please contact us at: editor@etceterapublications.ca or call us at 613-448-2321.

More than a snapshot

Making the most of your new gear

Black Friday and Boxing Day are a gear-lover's paradise. With discounts the story of the day, photographers can often find themselves with shiny, new equipment: a camera, lens, tripod, or maybe even a drone, or point-of-view (POV) camera to experiment with. Unboxing that new toy, however, is just the beginning. To truly make the most of your investment, now, in what is typically a quiet time, is when you should ensure you understand how to put your new equipment to its best use.

Let's be honest: most of us are guilty of skipping the manual. After all, how hard can it be to figure out a new camera or lens? Those slim booklets (or PDFs) are packed with valuable information that can save you time and frustration later. Modern photography gear comes with a wealth of features, many of which aren't immediately obvious.

By reading the manual, you'll discover settings and functions that might otherwise remain hidden.

For example, does your new camera have a custom menu option? Can you reassign buttons to better suit your workflow? Understanding these features will not only make you more efficient but also help you take full advantage of what your equipment can do.

Each of us learns in different ways. Some can read a manual and immediately understand what the various menus and buttons can do for them. Others, however, are more "visual" learners. For those people a digital education is not only beneficial, but essential.

In the digital age, help is never far away. YouTube is a treasure trove of tutorials for almost every piece of photography gear imaginable. Whether you're looking to master your camera's autofocus system or understand the intricacies of a new editing tool, there's likely a video for it. Many creators specialize in easy-to-follow, hands-on demonstrations that can clarify even the most complex features.

While videos are a great supplement to your learning, it's important to choose reputable channels, and to understand that while some look to convey knowledge as efficiently as possible, others are there for entertainment more than anything else. Look for creators with a strong

track record, positive reviews, and content that aligns with your skill level. Bookmark your favourite tutorials for quick reference and consider subscribing to channels that provide consistent, high-quality advice.

Reading the manual and watching videos are excellent starting points, but the best way to learn your gear is by using it. There's no substitute for hands-on experience. Take your new camera or lens out for a test drive in low-pressure situations where mistakes won't cost you a critical shot.

Experiment with different settings, modes, and techniques. If your camera has manual controls, practice adjusting the aperture, shutter speed, and ISO to see how they impact your images. Test your new lens by shooting at various focal lengths and apertures to understand its strengths and limitations. If you've invested in lighting equipment, play with placement and intensity to get a feel for how it shapes your subjects.

Making mistakes is an essential part of learning. In fact, some of the most valuable lessons come from shots that didn't turn out as expected. Did you forget to adjust your white balance and end up with a series of overly warm photos? Did motion blur ruin an action shot because your shutter speed was too slow? These errors are opportunities to understand your gear more deeply.

The key is to analyse what went wrong and why. Many cameras today offer features like playback histograms and focus peaking, which can help you diagnose issues on the spot. By taking the time to troubleshoot, you'll build the confidence and skill needed to handle challenging situations in the future. Best advice: take a shot and look at the result and make changes as desired. Waiting till you get home to sit and examine a couple hundred images is more time consuming and less beneficial than seeing the result of what you did, immediately after you did it.

One of the ultimate goals of learning your gear is to develop muscle memory. In a high-stakes environment, there's no time to fumble with unfamiliar controls or menus. By practicing regularly, you'll train your hands to instinctively find the buttons and dials you need. This familiarity allows you to focus on composition, lighting, and storytelling rather than the mechanics of your equipment.

A great exercise is to simulate real-world scenarios. If you're a wedding photographer, practice adjusting settings

quickly in changing light conditions. If you shoot wildlife, rehearse tracking moving subjects with your autofocus system. The more you simulate your typical shooting environment, the more second nature your gear will become.

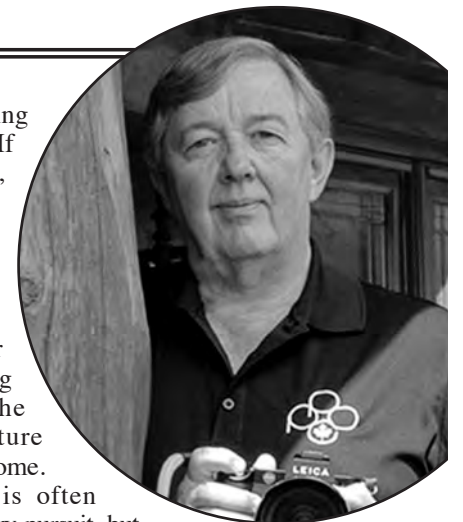
Photography is often considered a solitary pursuit, but it doesn't have to be. Joining local or online photography communities can provide additional support and inspiration. Many groups offer workshops, photo walks, and critique sessions that can accelerate your learning curve. Sharing your experiences with other photographers also creates opportunities to learn from their successes and challenges.

Workshops are a fantastic way to dive deeper into your new gear. Hands-on sessions with an experienced instructor can clarify tricky concepts and introduce you to techniques you might not have considered.

Remember to celebrate your progress. Mastering new equipment takes time and effort, but every small victory, like nailing your first long exposure shot or getting perfect focus on a fast-moving subject – is worth acknowledging. Photography is as much about the journey as it is about the destination.

Black Friday and Boxing Day sales are a great way to upgrade your photography gear, but the real value comes from learning how to use it effectively. Start by reading the manual, supplement your knowledge with online resources, and spend plenty of time practicing in low-stakes environments. Embrace mistakes as part of the learning process and strive to develop the muscle memory that will make your gear an extension of your vision.

When the next big shoot comes around, you'll be ready, not just with new equipment, but with the skills and confidence to make it work for you. Camera equipment regardless of its cost is nothing more than a tool, but a tool you don't know how to use will never give you an advantage.



Sudoku 6 x 6

	1		4	2	
		6		1	
	5		1		
	3				4
2				6	5
5					1

COMPLETE EACH GRID WITH NUMBERS FROM 1 TO 6, KEEPING IN MIND THAT:

- a number can only appear once per row
- a number can only appear once per column
- a number can only appear once in each box of 6 squares

1	4	2	3	5	6
5	6	3	1	4	2
4	5	6	2	3	1
3	2	1	3	4	5
4	3	5	6	2	1
3	1	5	4	2	6

Horoscopes

ARIES – Mar 21/Apr 20

You are likely to question information you receive this week, Aries. Investigate things further, but remain receptive to what others are saying.

TAURUS – Apr 21/May 21

Taurus, it is time to solidify plans and any grand schemes you may have; otherwise, you may not know which path to take. For now, start outlining your ideas.

GEMINI – May 22/June 21

Practice your communication skills, Gemini, as you are likely to need them this week. You may need to resolve a sticky situation and serve as a voice of reason.

CANCER – June 22/July 22

Cancer, this week you may be looking to clean house, so to say. You are tossing away old beliefs and habits and are ready to embrace something new. It might be an exciting time.

LEO – July 23/Aug 23

Leo, everything that you are going through right now is part of a cycle that has a beginning and an end. If you wait it out, you will find that patience pays off.

VIRGO – Aug 24/Sept 22

Virgo, maintain open lines of communication. Some may offer advice, while others may seek it. Be receptive to the former and do your best to accommodate the latter.

LIBRA – Sept 23/Oct 23

Do what you can to help others in need, Libra. Offer your services and insight, and be prepared to help in other ways as well.

SCORPIO – Oct 24/Nov 22

Scorpio, you are giving off an energy lately that others might be attracted to. Don't be surprised if your fan club increases in the next few days. Enjoy the attention.

SAGITTARIUS – Nov 23/Dec 21

Communication from a former friend or an old roommate may catch you by surprise this week, Sagittarius. Embrace this opportunity to reconnect.

CAPRICORN – Dec 22/Jan 20

Capricorn, you've been waiting patiently to say something and looking for an opportunity to share your input. You might need to interrupt if you feel it is important enough.

AQUARIUS – Jan 21/Feb 18

Your mind feels as if it's going in a million different directions, Aquarius. One way to alleviate distractions is to direct your energy to an assortment of small projects.

PISCES – Feb 19/Mar 20

Pisces, sometimes it seems like what you are saying is going in one ear and out the other. Don't let your frustration get the best of you. Keep trying to be heard.

For the up-coming artist



From our home to yours Christmas Recipe

Cut-out Cookies

There is something special about enjoying a couple of holiday shaped sugar cookies with a mug of hot chocolate on a cold and snowy winter's evening. While I have a holiday cookbook, there are some very tasty cookie recipes on websites. Depending on the cookie cutters you have, the recipe is also good for other holiday cookies, such as Easter or Valentines Day. I have had a collection of holiday themed cookie cutters since my children were little and have enjoyed carrying on the tradition with my grandchildren. Hope you enjoy them as much as I do!

Ingredients

- 2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¾ cup unsalted room temperature butter
- ¾ cup white sugar
- 1 large egg (at room temperature)
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- Optional ¼ tsp almond extract

Directions

Whisk the flour, baking powder and salt in a medium sized bowl. In a large bowl mix together the butter and sugar until smooth and creamy, then add the egg and vanilla extract, until well mixed. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and mix until well combined.

You can add a bit more flour if dough is too soft or sticky. Refrigerate until dough is cool and easier to roll. After dividing the dough into two parts, roll out each one out until about ¼ in thickness. Then grab your favourite holiday cookie cutters and cut the dough out and place on a greased cookie sheet. You can re-roll the dough scraps which increases the number of cookies made.

Baking

Bake in a 350-degree oven for 11-12 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove from oven and cool for about 5 minutes before removing to a cooling rack. When they are cooled, then you can enjoy taste-tasting the cookies to ensure they are delicious!

If you plan to decorate them, then whip up a batch of your favourite icing, adding food colouring to make the decorations more colourful and sprinkles to add a special something to them. Note, however these cookies are delicious without decoration.

Carol Thompson Goddard



Neapolitan Squares

Ingredients

- 1 ¼ cups Graham cracker crumbs
- ½ cup butter or margarine, melted
- ½ cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups medium coconut
- 11 oz can sweeten condensed milk

Directions

Bottom layer: combine first 4 ingredients. Press into 9 x 9-inch pan with greased sides. This makes it easier to remove side pieces. Bake in 350F oven for 10 minutes.

Second layer: In clean bowl, combine coconut with

condensed milk. Spread over bottom layer. Bake in 350F oven for 20 minutes or until a very slight brown begins to show on the edges. Allow to cool before frosting.

Icing ingredients

- 2 cups Icing sugar
- 4 tbsp butter or margarine
- 3 tbsp Maraschino cherry juice

Directions

Beat all together, adding a bit more juice, if needed, to make icing soft enough to spread. Spread over cooled bars. Cover tightly and store at least a day.

Cut into 36 squares

Linda Vogel