the north dundas TIMES
Reaching by direct mail to over 5,500 homes and businesses in Winchester and area
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House of Lazarus Food Bank devastated by major fire

by Brandon Mayer

The House of Lazarus Food Bank, operated out of the former Scotiabank building on Main Street in South Mountain, suffered terrible losses in a fire early last week. The fire occurred on the afternoon of Tuesday, April 25, and while the building is still standing with minimal damage noticeable on the outside, the inside has been damaged to the point that it will likely no longer be usable by HOL. Thankfully no one was injured in the fire.

House of Lazarus Executive Director, Cathy Ashby, confirmed that it is not yet known how the fire started, but that the insurance company is investigating. Despite the fact that the building is still standing, the relatively untouched brick exterior is misleading, as the damage inside is significant. The Times was invited to observe the interior damage. The fire started in the rear kitchen area which has equipment melted beyond recognition. The entire interior has walls damaged and covered in heavy soot, and a ceiling that had to be torn away during the firefighting process. Most disheartening off all is the large quantity of food left behind, still recognizable, yet not fit for consumption.

Luckily, some of the most expensive food stored at the Food Bank – namely, the meat – was able to be saved and is being stored at Winchester Foodland thanks to the generosity of owner Dan Pettigrew. "After the fire was out… volunteers just backed up with trucks and the firefighters brought out crate after crate of frozen food," said Cathy. Cathy noted that all four North Dundas fire department stations responded to the blaze, and they put out the fire quite rapidly. She recalls being told that it only took about half a tanker truck full of water to extinguish the fire.

The Food Bank was able to reopen in a temporary location a short distance down the street at the Mountain Township Agricultural Hall, thanks to an offer from the local Lions Club to use their room. Plans are in place to move into a more permanent location in Mountain in about a month. The HOL does operate one other Food Bank, in Ingleside, but the main centre for food bank operations had been the location in South Mountain. "Huge losses" were therefore suffered in the fire. "It was like our main warehouse," Cathy added.

The hardest thing about the fire is that the food stock must now be replenished. "We have to start over," said Cathy. Thankfully and unsurprisingly, North Dundas is showing its generous side. The support from the community has been a welcome silver lining after the fire's devastating impact. Anyone wanting to help restore this invaluable local resource can bring food donations to one of the following locations: Township of North Dundas office in Winchester, Loughlin's Country Store in Hallville, Scotiabank (Chesterville, Kemptville, or Morrisburg), Garden Villa in Chesterville, Nationview Public School in South Mountain, Jonssons' Your Independent Grocer in Kemptville, and the BMR location in Winchester. Canned goods were also accepted at the North Dundas Business Expo on April 29.

Interested in setting up your own food drive to help out the HOL in a time of need? You can get in touch with the HOL directly at 613-989-3830. Another great way to help out is by making a monetary donation online at https://hol.community/donate/.

Open Mic Café

submitted by North Dundas Arts Council

Winchester Open Mic Café will be debuting its summer series at 100 Club Park's Piano Pavilion, 577 Main Street West, Winchester, starting Sunday, May 7 from 2pm to 5pm. The announcement comes not a moment too soon as this popular gathering's many musicians and patrons will quickly tell you! Organizer Ann Brady says she has watched the once flagging, sixties-style coffeehouse blossom into a vibrant gathering of gifted friends from all over the Ottawa Valley. "People went into serious musical withdrawal, first from the COVID lockdowns and then when we closed for April," she laughs. "May 7th couldn't come soon enough! We've come a long way since our first open mic in August 2012. What we have now is something very special and unexpected. We've all become friends and grown to love one another's company, music and storytelling. Sunday is our time to be together." Brady, who also runs the 'Art in the Branches' exhibit at the Winchester Branch of SDG Library, says the summer venue at 100 Club Park will allow people to enjoy the fresh air and sunshine, bring their own sips and snacks, and stretch out on the grass with loved ones as they listen to some of the finest acoustic music around. There will also be a sound system this summer, to accommodate the ambient sound outdoors. Visitors are asked to check Winchester Open Mic Café's Facebook page each Sunday, where a weather statement will be posted for that day by noon. "All we pray for now is sunshine every Sunday afternoon this summer through August 27!" Brady adds. Admission is free, everyone is welcome, and there will be water bowls set out for the puppers as usual.

Ukranian Artist brings beauty to 'Art in the Branches' from half a world away

submitted by North Dundas Arts Council

Oleksandra Laskina knows a lot about beauty and how quickly it can be shattered. The professional artist from Ukraine now makes her home with her family in Chesterville. She is grateful to Canada for welcoming her, and she wants the whole world to know about the strength of the soul of Ukraine's artists and the beauty it champions in the face of the horrors of war.

"My works are filled with positive energy, with an emphasis on the radiance of colour," she explains. "Colour that warms the soul and fills us with warmth and kindness." Her workshop is the world around her. "Everything that happens in nature I transfer to the canvas. I want the colour and light in my paintings to bring joy and aesthetic pleasure."

A graduate of Obukhiv's Children's Art School, Oleksandra has a master's degree in art from the prestigious Zaporozhye National University's Faculty of Design in Ukraine. She maintains ties with her beloved homeland, serving as chair of 'Free Artist' in Ukraine and has recently become part of ArtEast in Ottawa. Her credits are numerous and impressive, including exhibits in Europe for 'Breath of Spring' organized by 'Art Without Borders', and at Kyiv's ARTEGO Gallery. In June 2021, Oleksandra Laskina was one of over 100 juried artists from all over the world who participated in 'We Contemporary' in Vienna.

Oleksandra's favorite style of painting is Impressionism. She loves its luscious colour, drenched with light and movement. Her favourite painter is Vincent van Gogh whose passion for painting inspires her. She spends her weekends in nature, with her new friends who are artists and share her love of Impressionism. "Our creativity brings us joy and peace of mind."

Oleksandra Laskina hopes her spring exhibit in 'Art in the Branches' will leave a pleasant impression on visitors to the Library. "Painting, like music, like a poet's verse, should always arouse happiness in the viewer. The Artist gives the viewer only the beautiful," she adds.

Oleksandra Laskina's art will be on exhibit through the month of May at the Winchester Branch of SDG Library located at 547 Main Street in Winchester. Come see the beauty that this very special Artist has brought with her from half a world away to her new home in Canada!

Fire department goes above and beyond with cemetery cleanup

by Brandon Mayer

On April 15, members of the North Dundas Fire Department, Station 3, helped with a task that went far beyond the call of duty. About 10 members got together in response to a social media request for help in cleaning up ice storm damage at the Maple Ridge Cemetery on County Road 43 between Winchester and Chesterville.

Winchester Fire Chief Dan Kelly explained that the social media post was first noticed by firefighter Chris Helmer who put the message out to his fellow firefighters. The group of 10 volunteers then got together on their own time and using their own equipment (not affiliated with the Fire Department) and assisted in the cleanup for several hours.

When asked, Chief Kelly confirmed that it is not very common for members of the fire department to get together off duty for things such as ice storm cleanup, but that this was a unique situation. "As we get older, all our families are buried there probably," he explained. "It's in our nature to help. If anybody asks, we do."

The Manager of the Maple Ridge Cemetery who originally put out the call for help is James Shadbolt. "It probably would have killed us doing it," James joked. "Everyone worked together and got a lot cleaned up." He explained that Gerald Stewart. who does the digging for the cemetery, came out with his backhoe to push the brush into a pile to make the firefighters' work easier.

James noted that a few days before the firefighters came out, he also had help from Roger Patterson and Shane Freeman with the cleanup operation. Specifically, they cut down a tree that needed to be cut down and cleaned it all up. There was another person who helped before the firefighters came, but James regrets not being able to remember his name. He extends his thanks to the gentleman regardless.

The three or four hours of work completed by the firefighters – in addition to the help from others – may seem like a small gesture, but it's actions such as these that make North Dundas a great place to live. Hats off to those who assisted with the cemetery cleanup and ensured that lost loved ones remain resting in peace with dignity. We are lucky to be in the presence of those who show heroism in far more ways than one.

The snowball keeps rolling

by Brandon Mayer

A recent study funded by the Government of Canada has answered a question that I'm sure had everyone on pins and needles – Do Canadians prefer shopping online or shopping in stores? The answer likely won't surprise many… more Canadians prefer in-person shopping. I guess nothing beats the thrill of holding and inspecting items before purchasing them and getting to take them home that very same day. Plus, no credit card is needed, and the outing can be fun. Win win, right?

The study, called "How Geography Impacts Shopping Patterns, Habits and E-Commerce Across Canada", found that 57.4% of urban dwellers and 63.7% of rural dwellers prefer to shop in-person as opposed to buying things online. I suspect that the number would be higher if not for the "snowball effect" that seems to keep changes rolling year after year.

I prefer in-person shopping as well, but it has changed in the last decade or so. More often than not, it seems that stores can't justify carrying physical stock of a wide variety of items anymore. This is especially true of large chains. They don't like the overhead costs of keeping stock, so they only have commonly purchased basics in their stores, and either sell specialty items online, or don't sell them at all. It can be frustrating as a consumer. I can't count the number of times I have walked into a store, cash in wallet, to buy a specific item only to end up ordering it from Amazon on my cellphone from right inside the store. When stores don't carry the things we need or want, shopping online becomes the only option.

Humans are creatures of learning. If we attempt to make a purchase at a store and are disappointed, we "save" that experience in memory and learn from it. If it happens a dozen times, we may reach the point when we simply stop attempting to go to stores, and instead go straight to shopping online. That is simple operant conditioning. Store owners can't expect to repeatedly disappoint consumers and keep their business.

The problem gets worse because it forms a "positive feedback loop" (i.e. A feeds B, and B feeds A). When customers get sick of finding an item listed in a catalogue or on a website only to find that it says "online only", they stop shopping in-person. When customers stop shopping in-person, stores lose money and have even more difficulty keeping lower priority items in stock, which drives more customers away, leading to less items available in-person, which drives more customers away, and so on. As Canadians know, once the snowball starts rolling down the hill, it just keeps rolling. Greedy retailers only have themselves to blame for pushing the Amazon snowball over the crest of the hill.

If something has to be purchased online anyway, a lot of consumers get driven to Amazon rather than the website of a smaller company because of the lower costs and free, fast shipping. It's hard to blame consumers who shop on Amazon, particularly during tough economic times, but as the snowball keeps rolling, we will get further and further away from the joys of in-person shopping.

As one example, my son recently needed cleats for the upcoming soccer season and we were told in a Nike store that most stores, even sports stores, are moving sales of cleats exclusively online. To walk into a store like Nike and be told they don't carry a basic piece of sporting equipment was astounding and shows the direction that shopping continues to take.

One of the most nostalgic parts of watching older movies, particularly Christmas movies, is seeing the full store shelves and the attentive service provided by store staff. I used to love doing Christmas shopping in-person. It would only take a day or two of shopping to get everyone on my list. Now, even though my wife and I still visit toy stores to surprise the kids with a couple of unique things, their requested gifts are usually things we can't buy in stores. I know of some people who simply let their kids place items in a virtual Amazon shopping cart now, instead of creating an actual wish list. This is not necessarily a gesture of support for Amazon, but rather a necessity after years of wasting precious time visiting store after store for items that are no longer sold in stores.

How can we help? The short answer is – we can't. Corporations will always try to save a dollar, even when they don't feel the bullet entering their foot each time they frustrate once loyal customers. The long answer may provide more hope. Department stores are far less likely to carry specific items or "specialty" items than small, local stores. Supporting local businesses is often billed as a "favour" to them, when in reality, their existence is valuable to us. Where large, greedy corporations fail, locally owned stores can pick up the slack. Are small retailers more expensive? Sometimes. But if it's true that well over half of us prefer in-person shopping, then we need to put our dollars where our mouth is.

The lesson here is that it's possible to catch a rolling snowball, even though we may take a tumble. Some snowballs, however, are worth chasing. I am not against change. The world will never be the same as it was a decade before it, and there is always just as much good change as there is bad change. The problem lies in changes that put money in greedy pockets, while taking away things we love. As for me, I took a stand! I didn't end up with a nostalgic blast from the past, but my kid got a shiny new pair of cleats.

The Skating Banquet: a bittersweet end to the Winchester Skating Club's regular season

by Kate Link-Horvath

The April banquet at the Winchester Skating Club was a bittersweet closure to the end of the season. For the Club's more than 80 skaters -- ranging from kindergarteners just learning to balance on the ice, to adult skaters who have come back to re-learn skills from younger days -- the banquet is a time when all the efforts and accomplishments of all can be recognized; it is a way to celebrate everything each and every skater has done throughout the year. After a fantastic lunch provided by the Club, skaters took to the stage of the Joel Steele Community Centre. Younger CanSkaters were given a report card along with a medal for their efforts. Older "Program Assistants" were recognized on stage for all of the work that they put in throughout the year to help the younger programs run. Any skater who achieved their gold level in any of the skating disciplines was awarded a Skate Canada certificate of Achievement, as well as a gold pin. For each skating group -- CanSkate, Pre-Star, Star Skate, Senior Star, and Adult Skate -- most improved and most dedicated trophies were awarded. There were many other awards given, such as the "Beauty of Skating Award" or the "PA of the Year Award," to really shine light upon all of the artistry and intention specific skaters put into their time on the ice.

While it was a great moment for each skater to reflect upon all that they have done and hope to do, the banquet also brought a melancholic feel for many graduating skaters. This year, the Skating Club had four graduating skaters. At the banquet, each graduating skater read a short piece they had written, talking about their time with the Club, their achievements, and advice for younger skaters. For almost all graduates, they have been with the Club all of their childhood; not only did they become fantastic athletes and grow as skaters, but they have also become young adults with one another, and have had many of the coaches guiding them since they were small. Presented to each graduate at the banquet was a personalized mug, with photos from this year's Ice Show. While this wasn't goodbye for all of the graduates, the banquet marked the end of an era; the four graduates thanked the Club for everything that they have done, and hope that other skaters will feel the levels of support shown to them in years to come.

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Better Training – Because of You

submitted by Jane Adams, WDMH Foundation

Winchester District Memorial Hospital (WDMH) is committed to learning. In fact, it is one of our core values and has been for years. The better trained our health care team is, the better care we can provide. Now, because of our generous donors, three new training manikins have been purchased to support infant, child and adult patient care.

"We are not talking about the mannequins you see on display in store windows. These manikins are so much more!" explains Kyle Jones, Manager, Education and Project Management. "These remarkable manikins are being used to train staff, physicians, and students by providing realistic simulations of real medical scenarios. These scenarios can be repeated over and over to help with the learning process, giving staff time to practice the skill, think through their care plan, and most importantly, ask a lot of questions."

So far, 18 staff and physicians have completed the two-day training program. It involves using computer software to create simulations and customize scenarios. In the future, training will also be offered to staff from other area hospitals.

"We know that when our team feels supported, trained, and confident, they are more likely to stay at WDMH," adds Kyle Jones. "Our teaching programs have helped us immensely with recruitment and retention over the years – for both nurses and physicians."

"Thank you to everyone who donated to the General Equipment Fund to help purchase this important training equipment," sums up Foundation Managing Director Kristen Casselman. "We all feel better knowing that giving the WDMH team this education could help save a life one day!"

The total cost of the manikins was $104,750.84.

AUDITION NOTICE – The Birds*

THE BIRDS*

DUNDAS COUNTY PLAYERS

A play by Conor McPherson, based on a story by Daphne du Maurier.
Directed by Shannon Murdock and produced by Ami Lynn Johnson
Dundas County Players is looking for 4 actors to perform in a suspenseful play containing several emotionally intense scenes.
Diane: A mature woman, late 40s – early 60s
Nat: A middle-aged man, a little younger than Diane
Julia: A younger woman, of child-bearing age
Tierny: An older man, big, tough, very rough around the edges
The play will be performed on November 17, 18, 19 and 24, 25, 26 with technical and dress rehearsals scheduled in the weeks just before.
Auditions will be held on Sunday May 21 between 1 and 4 p.m. and on Wednesday May 24 from 7-9 p.m.

Please email auditons@moiralaw.ca to schedule yours!

**Although drawn from the same sources, this play is unrelated to the movie of the same name.*

Growing Food

submitted by Danielle Labonte, MPH, MAN, RD

Community Gardening

Spring is here and people can get to their gardens. Having a garden is a great way to access a variety of fresh and delicious vegetables and fruit, and research shows that those who have a garden eat more vegetables and fruit than those who do not. If you have never gardened before, participating in community gardening can be a helpful way to learn about getting started. Community gardens comein many different shapes and sizes - large or small, on the ground or on rooftops, in plots, or in planters. They can also be a mix of all of these things. Some are communal, where everyone shares the work and the harvest, some have separate, individual plots for each gardener, and some are a combination.

Community gardens provide benefits such as social connectedness and an opportunity to learn something new. In addition to the fresh food they provide, community gardens also contribute to our health through providing the opportunity to be active in nature, spend quality time with others and meet new people, and connect to your community overall. If you are interested in starting or expanding a garden, check out www.foodcoreLGL.ca/inventories.html and click on the yellow "Growingand Gathering Food" icon to learn where you can buy plants and seeds, participate in seed exchanges and, find the locations for local community gardens.

Gardening at Home

While some people choose to participate in community gardening, there are options for those who would like to garden at home instead. One option is container gardening, where you grow vegetables and plants in boxes or bins, instead of in the ground. This way, you can have a garden on your balcony, porch, or deck. Container gardening can include a variety of fruit and vegetables; for example, beets, cabbage, carrots, green onions, lettuce, bok choy, kale, tomatoes, peppers, and radishes. It is helpful to learn about what grows well in different sized containers. In addition to size, you will need to consider container drainage, soil and fertilizing, water and light, planting and grooming, and insects and disease. Try not to get discouraged by this list! Some of these issues are straightforward and easily dealt with, for example, containers don't have to be a big expense. You could start with a windowsill garden to grow herbs. You can find excellent information about container gardening from Master Gardeners of Ontario, www.landscapeontario.com.

Choosing Locally Grown Food

This is the season to get our gardens started, but some people prefer to get their vegetables and fruit at the grocery store or the farmers' markets. To get the best out of Ontario's growing season, choose foods with the "Foodland Ontario" logo at your grocery store, or visit local food markets and farm gates. Choosing local food supports job creation and economic development. Buying food from closer to home means it is fresher. In addition, when you get to know the people who grow and produce your food you may feel more connected to what you eat. Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit at meals and snacks and you will have a variety of colours, textures, tastes, vitamins, minerals, and fibre.

One thing to remember is, no matter where your fresh vegetables and fruit come from, all you need to wash them before eating or preparing them is cool, running, safe water. Go towww.healthunit.org for food safety information for garden projects as well as choosing, cleaning,storing, and preparing vegetables.

Consider a career with the OPP

submitted by Ontario Provincial Police

May 15 to 21, 2023 is Police Week and this year, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is celebrating police-community partnerships. In more than 320 communities across the Province, members of the OPP work collaboratively with the public and official partners to prevent crime and uphold the law.

If you are looking for a rewarding career, why not consider becoming a police officer? The OPP hires hundreds of police officers per year for one of three recruit class intakes. No previous experience in law or security is required.

Candidates are encouraged to attend an upcoming event where they can interact with members of our team and learn more about what a career in policing has to offer.

Date: May 16, 2023
Time: 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Location: OPP East Region Headquarters
525 Queen Street
Smiths Falls, Ontario

RSVP: Registration may be required in order to attend. Please visit opp.ca/events to learn more.

Note to Attendees: Government-issued photo identification is required for admission into OPP facilities, and backpacks are not permitted.

The Ontario Provincial Police is dedicated to ensuring open, accessible, equitable and respectful workplaces, and is committed to reflecting the diverse communities it serves. We encourage applications from members of our diverse communities, including Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, women, persons from racialized groups, 2SLGBTQ+ persons, those who are able to speak fluently in another language(s), and anyone committed to a rewarding career in public service. The Ontario Provincial Police is an equal opportunity employer and accommodations will be provided through our hiring processes as necessary.

To learn more about employment opportunities within the OPP, visit opp.ca/careers.

KOHEN H, GRADE 4, WINCHESTER PS
What is something mommy always says to you?
Go to bed
What makes mommy happy?
When I surprise her
What is your mommy really good at?
Being a mom
What is your mommy not very good at?
Being greedy
Where is your mommy's favourite place to go?
Prince Edward Island
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
Probably chocolate

BLAKE E, GRADE 6, WINCHESTER PS
What is something mommy always says to you?
You're grounded (jokingly)
What makes mommy happy?
The dogs
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
Go to work
What is your mommy really good at?
Cooking
What is your mommy not very good at?
Making jokes
Where is your mommy's favourite place to go?
The park where she got married to dad
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
A big teddy bear

LIAM W, GRADE 2, WINCHESTER PS
What is something mommy always says to you?
Clean your room
What makes mommy happy?
Giving her big big big big big hugs
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
Work
What is your mommy really good at?
Art
What is your mommy not very good at?
Cooking
Where is your mommy's favorite place to go?
Shawarma Place

TRYSSY S, GRADE 3, WINCHESTER PS
What is something mommy always says to you?
Clean the house
What makes mommy happy?
When I clean the house with her sometimes without her asking me
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
She stays in her room and eats her Easter candy or she cleans
What is your mommy really good at?
Keeping surprises
What is your mommy not very good at?
Listening to people
Where is your mommy's favoruite place to go?
The USA because most of her family and cousins are there
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
Flowers and her favourite chocolate

NATE V, GRADE 1, WINCHESTER PS
What is something mommy always says to you?
Clean your room
What makes mommy happy?
Whenever I am a good listener
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
Work
What is your mommy really good at?
Cooking
What is your mommy not very good at?
Sorting
Where is your mommy's favourite place to go?
Everywhere
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
Chocolate

LILLIAN L, GRADE 1, WINCHESTER PS
What is something mommy always says to you?
Clean up the toilet or bedroom
What makes mommy happy?
Me
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
Sometimes work, sometimes run errands
What is your mommy really good at?
Working at her work
What is your mommy not very good at?
She's good at most things
Where is your mommy's favourite place to go?
The mall
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
Candy because my mom loves candy

LINCOLN V, GRADE JK, WINCHESTER PS
What is something mommy always says to you?
Goodnight
What makes mommy happy?
Hugs
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
I don't know because I'm not there
What is your mommy really good at?
Our laundry
What is your mommy not very good at?
Building
Where is your mommy's favourite place to go?
The classrooms
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
Flowerpot

EVEY V, GRADE 3, WINCHESTER PS
What is something mommy always says to you?
Play nice
What makes mommy happy?
Whenever we listen and do the job whenever she tell us to
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
Probably work
What is your mommy really good at?
Cooking
What is your mommy not very good at?
Nothing
Where is your mommy's favourite place to go?
Anywhere with us
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
A nice quiet day to sleep in

MAX W, GRADE 5, WINCHESTER PS

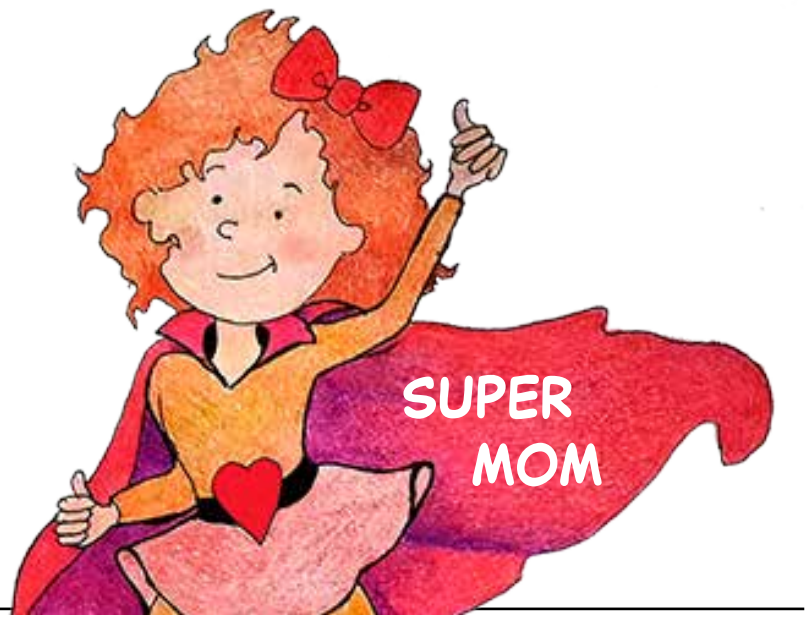
What is something mommy always says to you?
Make sure to always believe in yourself
What makes mommy happy?
Me hugging her
What was your mommy like as a child?
Cool and awesome
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
Does her work
What is your mommy really good at?
Art
What is your mommy not very good at?
Nothing
Where is your mommy's favorite place to go?
Winchester
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
Whatever her heart desires

JAXSYN Q, GRADE 3, WINCHESTER PS

What is something mommy always says to you?
You're my little porkchop
What makes mommy happy?
When I give her kisses and love
What was your mommy like as a child?
Goofy
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
I don't know
What is your mommy really good at?
Talking
What is your mommy not very good at?
Listening
Where is your mommy's favorite place to go?
The beach
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
Love

TYLER E, GRADE5, WINCHESTER PS

What is something mommy always says to you?
I love you, Buddy
What makes mommy happy?
The dogs
What was your mommy like as a child?
How am I supposed to know that?
What does your mommy do when you're not around?
I don't know
What is your mommy really good at?
Being a mom
What is your mommy not very good at?
Sports
Where is your mommy's favorite place to go?
Home
What does your mommy want for Mother's Day?
A love card



The land of Big Lizards

by Brandon Mayer

My family and I had the privilege of taking a 10-day vacation to Florida last month. It was quite an experience, and I wouldn't dare pass up the opportunity to share some of our experiences, just like I did for beautiful Nova Scotia last summer.

Florida is home to alligators, of course. They love the state because it was originally all swampland, and much of it still is. Gators are great for bringing in tourists, and it's easy to find gator imagery on merchandise at stores all over Florida. In one area called "the Everglades", we enjoyed an airboat ride over swampy waters to spot some gators up close for ourselves. I even got to hold one, as you'll see in the photo. He loved being massaged behind his ears, and actually purred in response. Purred!

We attended "Gator Golf", where we got to play mini put in the presence of these awesome creatures. Within a day or two, I had an embarrassing moment when I could not, for the life of me, remember what alligators were called. After a few seconds of frustration, I stumbled on the term "Big Lizard", and it would have been a waste of humour not to continue calling them that. And thus, a new term was coined. Copyright pending.

Another adventurous experience was a visit to the Kennedy Space Center (forgive the American spelling of "Centre"). There was lots to see, but one highlight was a visit to the actual control room used for the launch of the Apollo 8. There was also a real rocket on display, one of two unused rockets from the Apollo missions. The size of the rocket is immense and can't be described. It's a "must see" for yourself type of size.

Of course, swimming was fun, and getting a dose of spring sunshine was welcome. We visited Sarasota Beach, which brags as being "the number one rated beach in America". The water is warm and clear, and the sand is as fine as flour and stays cool even when the sun hits it. The best part about Sarasota Beach is the free souvenirs – massive sunburns of course! Unfortunately, the kids didn't get a souvenir, only the adults did, but better luck next time. My back is still itchy as I write this!

The highlight of our vacation that will probably be most interesting to local readers, particularly those who are into fancy new technology or environmental sustainability, is the fact that we rented a Tesla Model Y for the 10 days. It was supposed to be a surprise for the kids, but we couldn't hold it in, and they found out a couple of weeks in advance. So now the real question – how does it drive?

At the risk of being mugged by all the "dieselheads" of the world, I will admit that the Tesla drives like butter. It has incredible power and range for a battery-operated car, and it's jam packed with cool driver assist features. In fact, it drove itself for much of the time we spent on the interstate, speed and steering included. It even drives itself in stop and go traffic!

One downside was charging the car. An 80% charge would only take about 20-25 minutes at a supercharger, with minimal cost (a fraction of what gas costs), but when you're on vacation, wasted time is not a good feeling. As I have written in the past, electric cars are going to become dominant in the decades ahead whether we want them to or not. If governments want us to switch to electric transportation, then electrical grid upgrades will be needed to eliminate the waiting so that we can charge at home. My wife and I agree that although it was neat, the Tesla is not a "vacation car".

We learned a tonne in Florida, and had a much needed chance to reconnect as a family and get back to basics. Many thanks to my wife's parents for flying us out and letting us stay with them. You can bet we will be back. Until next time, Big Lizards!

Baldwin's Birds

Just a few ruffled feathers!

As I looked out of our front window and was thinking about what I should talk to you about this week. A circling Turkey Vulture caught my eye as it patrolled the fields and hedgerows seeking some sort of kill on which to feed. Coincidentally, but not really related, Turkey Vultures don't catch "live" food; there was a sudden flurry of activity as all the birds in the front garden beat a hasty retreat! I scanned the garden quickly to catch a glimpse of what I think was a Merlin, as it flew rapidly by, with its quite distinguishable barred tail feathers showing, but with no success at grabbing some poor smaller bird for lunch! The Merlin definitely likes a fresh catch, but in this case wasn't successful, so our birds were able to re-group and then return to their normal activities.

Their constant very nervous looks around them as they fed easily explained how quick they all were to react to the marauding hunter and they survived yet again, for which I was grateful, but not so the still hungry Merlin.

Last week, I mentioned how quickly the birds transform themselves from their somewhat drab winter colouring to their brilliant spring ones. My example of such a bird is the Chipping Sparrow with its now very clear eye markings and its lovely bright brown head, making it quite a striking member of our avian friends. Who is not lost in the new wealth of colour that the spring plumages bring us to enjoy? I hope that you too are enjoying what Nature's birds are doing for us here in our garden. Stay safe and well but above all else enjoy.

Cheers,
John Baldwin

Tid Bit Musings

by Elva Patterson Rutters RSSW

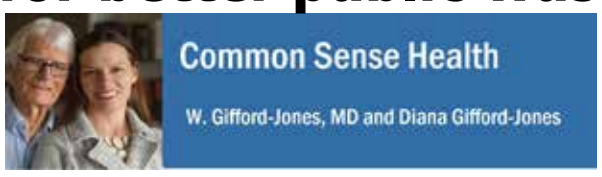
Are you aware that the most detrimental weapon in our world/community/relationships is the tongue? The atomic bomb or chemical warfare can wipe out many, but the human tongue leaves the targets alive and often forever in great distress. It is by no chance the loving God placed the tongue inside a mouth, behind a set of teeth and a set of lips! The ears are placed on the outside of the head open to listen freely. The old chant "sticks and stones can break my bones but words will never hurt me" is totally erroneous. Physical injuries heal leaving scars while verbal assaults can leave an individual psychologically victimized and distraught. This has a strong connection to mental illness for all parties involved.

As the human race, we need to strive to hear the "other" side of the story while recognizing that there is a third side, void of emotional connections, that recognizes more objectivity. The world is a very delicate balance of sane and insane actions of mankind against mankind. Being the recipient of negative verbal liturgies often leaves the person feeling hopeless, helpless, unworthy, negated, and targeted. The very soul of a being is affected resulting in fear of a repeat performance either from the same person or the next person. The Bible warns of the detriment of an unbridled or forked tongue. The latter being when someone talks well to you, then bad-mouths you behind your back. Positive messages may soothe the soul, but the internal damage is like a scab forever open to further infection.

Trying our best to affirm someone with positive messages is within our control. We can't control another person. Tempering our words with love and kindness will be more productive for our world/community. The need to recognize change can be instituted for the betterment of a relationship/institution/community but it does not entail coercion or abuse. Try to proceed to embrace the situation with grace and diplomacy. Reminding ourselves that the attacker is feeling poorly about themselves and is subconsciously "trying" to bring you down to their level of self esteem is vital but difficult to do. Forgiveness is closely linked to moving on in your life. You have "forgiven' when you can recall the situation without the emotional chaos. Forgiveness is challenging (a 12 step process) and does not have to occur with a face to face interaction.

Regardless of someone else's tongue, you are special and worthwhile just because you are you!

Make a stink for better public washrooms



When asked how to become a famous comedian, Steve Martin replied, “Be so good they can’t ignore you.” It’s true, bad performers can usually be ignored. But there’s no ignoring bad public washrooms.

Public washrooms have a reputation for abysmal filth, as evidenced by dirty toilets, overflowing trash, empty or broken soap dispensers, sloppy countertops, and door handles not to be touched.

An American survey found that 21 percent of respondents used a public washroom at least six times a week, sometimes over 15 times! The reason was not always obvious.

Youth tend to visit washrooms to use their phones, change their clothes, or “get away”. In fact, 21 percent of youth acknowledge using public washrooms to take a mental health break, to avoid someone, and on occasion to cry.

Older people, in addition to using the facilities, also visit public washrooms to check their appearance.

Whatever the reason to visit, how important is it to take precautions? The good news is that some of the germs found in public washrooms are no different than the germs found in many other places, including the bathroom at home.

Take Staphylococcus aureus, for example. It will be found in dirty public washrooms. But it is also commonly carried around by 20-30 percent of people on their skin or in the respiratory system. It is an opportunistic pathogen, meaning it starts to cause trouble not when commonly encountered in the washroom but when the immune system is weakened or when the natural balance of bacteria in the gut is altered.

Authorities disagree on how long certain other nasty germs survive or how readily they cause infection. But many bathroom studies have shown remarkable staying power – up to 8 days for E. coli. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the flu can survive on some surfaces for 48 hours.

Washing hands after using public facilities is a no brainer. Yet a study published in Antimicrobial Resistance & Infection Control found that handwashing and hand-drying equipment in public washrooms are facilitating infections due to contaminated sink handles and paper towel dispensers. Plus, people don’t wash their hands with soapy water for 20 seconds or more.

Even with the best of efforts, some researchers have noted that “adequate hand hygiene may not always be achievable when using public washrooms.” That’s because the door handle used to leave the washroom is covered in germs.

Opting out of using a public bathroom and resorting to “holding behaviour” is not advisable. “Always go to the bathroom when you have a chance,” goes the sage advice of King George V. Royalty have their own reasons. But among common folk, holding urine in the bladder can invite bacteria in the urine to multiply and cause the development of urinary track infections.

When you’ve got to go, you’ve got to go.

But there’s worse news to report. A study published in 2020 in Physics of Fluids described a phenomenon known as "toilet turbulence." It’s an alarming and repulsive discovery to learn that flushing a toilet can send small droplets of water and aerosols containing fecal germs three feet into the air above the seat!

One public health message advises users to turn away from the toilet when flushing. Good lord! There’s a reason for a toilet seat lid. Put it down before you flush.

Making a stink about public washrooms that are poorly designed and infrequently cleaned is probably the best course of action. After all, what restaurant or community venue wants to be associated with disgusting washrooms?

Sign-up at www.docgiff.com to receive our weekly e-newsletter. For comments, contact-us@docgiff.com. Follow us on Instagram @docgiff and @diana_gifford_jones

The Weather with Connor

Hello, everyone! Welcome back to another week of The Weather with Connor. This week I'd like to talk about something that I saw back on April 24th, which was a day that had many pretty rain showers making their way through Eastern Ontario. What I saw was extremely unexpected though.

Naturally, when there's pretty clouds around, I'm out to take a peek at them. That actually wasn't the case in this scenario though, I was just out doing some errands on a Monday night without my cameras in the vehicle.

I'm on my way to Casselman to get some groceries. For the entire drive, I am looking around at the pretty landscape, with the sun close to setting and rain showers around. I am getting on HWY 417 off HWY 138, when I look over to my left and see a cute little funnel cloud beginning to dip down out of the cloud base of a small rain shower. Astounded at what I'm seeing, I pull over on the side of the on-ramp.

First of all, I was shocked at what I was seeing. It was 7 degrees out at the time, usually way too cold for anything of this nature to happen. This shower had other ideas though, and decided to just straight up disobey the weather conditions at the time.

I pull out my phone and snap a few quick photos, and start posting it on my social media accounts. My comments were from people who were just as shocked as I was, and many who were confused about how this could happen when it's cold outside. Because of all the confusion, I decided to explain it in this week's column.

This type of funnel cloud is one called a cold core funnel cloud. These form in different conditions than a regular funnel and/or tornado would. In a cold core funnel case, the air mass is much cooler and benign, but the air aloft is unusually cold. A regular funnel would form in a much warmer air mass in an energetic environment.

So anyway, I sat on the side of the highway watching this cold core funnel cloud dance around the sky for a good 2 or 3 minutes. After that, it started to evaporate. It did not touch down and become a tornado, which is the usual outcome for a cold core funnel. They almost always do not touch down, and even if they do, they are much, much weaker than a regular tornado.

This was a nice little warm-up for the upcoming 2023 chase season. I am always down for some random weather shenanigans where I see a totally random funnel cloud when it's 7 degrees outside. I'm excited to finally get this spring over with and start the summer. I think it will be an active season for Eastern Ontario, with lots of good storms to see, which also means there will be lots of storms for me to go out and chase.

Chasing doesn't seem like it will be happening anytime soon, though. We're stuck in this pattern of chillier temperatures with cloudier and rainy conditions. I expect that to change about halfway through May, and then it'll get warmer.

That will do it for this week's column. Thank you for reading, and I'll see you in a couple weeks!

Community Food Share's Fill-a-Bag inviting volunteer teams

Community Food Share is heading for their biggest food drive of the year during May with the Fill-a-Bag campaign. Drivers and their teams are falling into place but there are still a few volunteer teams needed for full coverage in Dundas and Stormont Counties.

On Saturday, May 6, grocery bags will be delivered by a team of drivers and volunteers to most households in the villages of Dundas and Stormont Counties (in some areas, the weekend of May 6th) and then a week later, on Saturday May 13, those same teams will return to pick up the bags—hopefully filled with non-perishable food for Community Food Share's food banks.

The combination of COVID and inflation has led to an unprecedented demand on food banks, not only in our area but across the Province.

The Fill-a-Bag food drive will be the major event that stocks the food bank shelves so that no person or family in our community goes hungry this summer.

If you can offer your services for a couple of hours on those two Saturdays, either as a driver or a person who will deliver the bags to each home, we would like to hear from you. Please call our co-ordinator, Jane Schoones at 613 898-0781 or leave a message at either of our food banks in Morrisburg and Winchester.

We are unable to deliver to apartments or seniors' buildings; however, those residents are invited to purchase a pre-made bag at a local grocery store. Those bags will be counted in the Fill-a-Bag numbers the week of May 6-13. You're also welcome to send a monetary donation indicating that it's for the Fill-a-Bag 2023 campaign.

The many smiles of the 25th anniversary

VOTE NOW!

submitted by CECCE

To celebrate its 25th anniversary, L'École catholique organized the Smiles Challenge: a highly original contest that brought out over 3,600 creative smiles in its schools over the past few weeks! This great participation testifies to the joy, excitement and sense of well-being in more than 300 schools in Ontario's eight French-language Catholic school boards.

"The Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est (CECCE), along with the seven other French-language Catholic school boards in Ontario, is delighted with the great participation of its school community. Our students have once again demonstrated their boundless creativity, an essential skill for success," said CECCE Chair Johanne Lacombe .

"L'École catholique celebrates its 25th anniversary. What better way to bring joy to our faces and create a festive atmosphere in our communities than with positive, caring initiatives like this contest. I urge community members to vote for their favourite smiles amongst the finalists' creations," adds Marc Bertrand, CECCE Director of Education.

It's time to vote!

Students, staff and the general public are now invited to visit the L'École catholique website to vote for their favourite "smile" among the 12 finalists from their school board. It will be possible to vote once a day for one "smile" per school board until May 7.

Thanks to your votes, three classes from each school board will win a prize of up to $300 towards a health and wellness activity or a field trip. Spread the word to your friends, family and social networks!

For more information on L'École catholique's Smiles Challenge or to vote, please visit ecolescatholiquesontario.ca/defisourires/.

Research supports farm organization policy and advocacy work

by Peggy Brekveld, President, OFA

As an organization representing farmers, Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) needs to know both the realities of the current situation as well as look forward to the kind of future we want for our sector and for Ontarians.

Knowledge is critical when you're taking positions on issues for the farming sector and our rural communities and that's why we support and invest in research.

Unlike many other agricultural organizations, the research OFA funds is less about determining the best crop to grow or looking at better ways to feed livestock, and more about processes and issues that play a key role in developing the policy positions we will take to government on behalf of our members.

Much of this research happens behind the scenes so, two years ago, we started hosting Research Day – an event where OFA's Farm Policy Research Group shares outcomes on the various research initiatives OFA is involved in and presents updates on other key issues the team is working on.

Our 2023 event took place at the end of March and engaged close to 200 people including farmers, researchers, consultants, agricultural organizations, government and municipal representatives, and media. Here are some highlights of the day:

Deadstock: An issue the livestock sector grapples with is finding solutions to what the industry calls deadstock – properly handling and disposing of animals that die unexpectedly on the farm. Jennifer MacTavish presented an update on a project she is leading for Livestock Research Innovation Corporation (LRIC) that is taking a new look at the issue from an international and innovation perspective, in hopes of uncovering practical new solutions the Ontario industry might be able to adopt. A final report is to be released soon.

Agri-tourism: Last year, OFA partnered with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) and the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) on the 2022 State of the Ontario Tourism Industry Report. We also conducted a local food and agritourism survey, and overall, we learned that the Ontario farms engaged in direct-to-consumer sales range in size and scope and offer a diverse range of product, and that agritourism is an industry ripe for growth and economic opportunity.

Cyber security: As farm businesses adopt more smart technology and connected systems, they also increase their exposure to cyber security risks. Abbas Yzadinejad of the University of Guelph's Cyber Science lab explained three common threats:

data breaches – a system is hacked and information is stolen

phishing – fake messages that look like they are from a trusted entity (like a bank) to trick a user into giving out credit card information or login credentials

ransomware – attacks where a system is frozen and held for ransom

Best practices for farmers to protect themselves include keeping software up to date, using strong passwords that are changed regularly, backing up data, and educating your staff on where threats come from.

Environmental practices: Dr. Michael Drescher from University of Waterloo has been studying environmental best management practices – windbreaks, on-farm forests and buffer strips – and what motivates farmers or hinders farmers from adopting these practices.

He found that over 70% of farmers maintain forests or wooded areas on their farms, 64% have planted windbreaks and just under half maintain riparian buffer strips. Leading motivators for these decisions were their own convictions, social pressures, and government.

Agriculture in northern Ontario: OFA has been a strong advocate for supporting agriculture in northern Ontario and OFA senior farm policy analyst Ben Lefort gave an overview of agriculture's economic footprint in the north and how that has changed in the last decade.

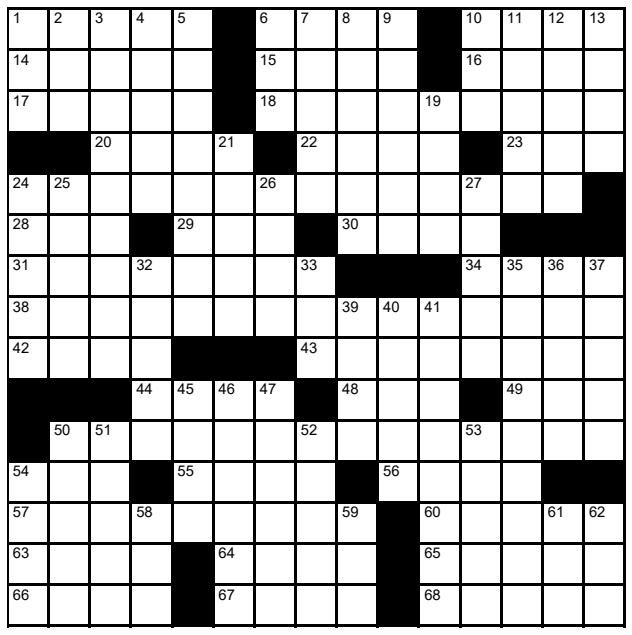
The number of farms has increased, and the revenue per acre of farmland has almost doubled, with much of the growth coming from field crop production. Funding for tile drainage and land clearing has played a key role in supporting this growth, but northern Ontario also needs infrastructure investments like roads and highspeed internet, as well as more access to farming support services like veterinarians.

Speakers also provided updates on OFA's slow moving vehicle road safety campaign, mental health research, fertilizer use, and soil health benchmarking in the Greenbelt.

For anyone interested in more information, recordings of all the sessions will be available on our YouTube Webinar channel and shared across our communication platforms in the coming weeks.

CROSSWORD

Just My Type by Barbara Olson
© ClassiCanadian Crosswords



Across
1 Have as a goal
6 Yoga surfaces
10 Actresses Issa and Charlotte
14 Animal track
15 Rent-___ (security guard)
16 Italian volcano
17 Clicked the floppy disk icon
18 Type of exercise that's gentle on
the joints
20 Levin and Gershwin
22 Classico competitor
23 Canadian Club or Wiser's
24 Grant Wood masterpiece of a farming couple
28 Not be taut
29 Christmas quaff
30 Major finale?
31 Get the goods on, visually
34 "This is ___ for Superman!"
38 Closing song at the Tragically Hip's final concert
42 Backwoodsy "drat"
43 Leave for another time
44 Clouseau or Gadget: Abbr.
48 Give permission to
49 Yankovic parody "Party in the ___"
50 One who pedals packages around
town
54 Canadian place of "sober second
thought": Abbr.
55 Ex-Israeli leader Barak
56 San ___ (Golden Gate city, for short)
57 Dickens tale featuring Mr. Gradgrind
60 Her albums include "19", "25" and "30"
63 Prefix meaning "concept"
64 Paradoxical Greek thinker
65 Raitt, LaFlamme and namesakes
66 Jekyll's flip side
67 ___ buco (veal dish)
68 Hip-hop counterpart to "bro"

Down
1 Donkey, or doofus
2 Hoppy brew, briefly
3 One with a stub and a tub of popcorn
4 "___ is human, ..."
5 Inducted into the clergy
6 Bad, in Boucherville
7 Future oak tree
8 Wrecker's fee
9 Water cooler tap
10 Street cred
11 Pong creator
12 Britannica book: Abbr.
13 Fill at the table
19 Heinz 57, so to speak
21 Shaggy's cartoon dog, for short
24 Equally unhappy
25 ___ Picchu (Peruvian landmark)
26 "It's ___ thing" ("girls don't get it")
27 Gets exciting, with "up"
32 Ignore advice to remain calm
33 "She's So High" singer Bachman
35 Degree of titillation, gossip-wise
36 "It's do ___"
37 Way to play without sheet music
39 Upper-level math subject: Abbr.
40 Words before "newt" or "the storm"
41 Innately gifted ones
45 "Nope, Nabokov"
46 Psychiatric prefix meaning "split"
47 Puffs of smoke
50 Small and weaselly, as eyes
51 How test errors are marked, often
52 Utopias
53 Diameter halves
54 ___ Tzu (Tibetan dog)
58 Bambi's mom, e.g.
59 The ___ (Sault Ste. Marie's nickname)
61 Horiz. map line
62 Early Oiler Tikkanen

Solutions to last week's Sudoku

Easy

5	6	2	9	1	3	7	8	4
1	7	8	5	2	4	3	6	9
3	4	9	7	6	8	5	1	2
4	2	1	6	3	7	9	5	8
9	8	3	2	5	1	4	7	6
7	5	6	4	8	9	2	3	1
8	1	7	3	9	2	6	4	5
2	3	5	1	4	6	8	9	7
6	9	4	8	7	5	1	2	3

Medium

2	6	4	5	1	7	9	8	3
1	3	5	9	8	4	7	6	2
7	9	8	3	2	6	1	4	5
3	5	2	6	7	8	4	1	9
4	8	7	1	3	9	5	2	6
9	1	6	2	4	5	8	3	7
5	7	3	8	6	1	2	9	4
8	2	9	4	5	3	6	7	1
6	4	1	7	9	2	3	5	8

4	8	7	9	1	6	5	2	3
5	3	1	7	8	2	4	9	6
9	6	2	3	4	5	1	8	7
3	2	5	4	9	8	7	6	1
1	7	9	5	6	3	2	4	8
6	4	8	2	7	1	3	5	9
8	5	3	1	2	9	6	7	4
7	1	6	8	5	4	9	3	2
2	9	4	6	3	7	8	1	5

Hard

		2		8	6	1		
								4
			2		1	5		
		8				2		6
		6	7		5	8		
			1				3	7
	4		6					
		3	5				4	
		7						3

			2	4	5			
				6		4	9	5
7						3	5	
2	5					6		9
3	8			7			2	
			4		8			
8	4			3				
			6	2				

Solution to last week's Crossword

R	E	D	O	■	P	L	E	A	■	■	G	L	U	T
A	X	E	S	■	E	A	R	N	S	■	E	A	S	E
G	I	F	T	■	P	U	R	S	E	■	L	I	E	N
S	T	A	R	S	■	D	O	W	N	W	A	R	D	S
■	■	M	I	C	E	■	R	E	S	E	T	■	■	■
T	E	A	C	A	R	T	■	R	E	T	I	R	E	■
W	I	T	H	D	R	A	W	■	■	S	N	A	R	E
A	G	O	■	■	S	U	S	H	I	■	■	D	A	D
S	H	R	E	W	■	■	W	E	L	L	S	I	T	E
■	T	Y	R	A	N	T	■	P	L	A	T	O	O	N
■	■	■	A	V	O	I	D	■	S	P	A	S	■	■
P	O	S	S	E	S	S	E	S	■	S	T	O	U	T
U	N	A	U	■	E	S	T	O	C	■	I	N	F	O
S	T	I	R	■	S	U	E	D	E	■	O	D	O	R
H	O	L	E	■	■	E	R	S	E	■	N	E	S	T

Survey reveals Gen Z and Millennials are prime news readership drivers

submitted by Community Wire

What do younger readers and their Boomer counterparts have in common? They're both on the same page with their love for the print medium, which is one of several revelations to come out of the latest Newspapers 24/7 survey (made possible in part by the Government of Canada).

News Media Canada first began conducting the annual survey in 2012, looking at readership by platform and time of day. The group typically conducts about one thousand interviews to get the information it needs, but this year it bumped its sampling size to almost 2,800. And with that wider lens came insights that might surprise you.

At the macro level, this year's research shows that consumption of newspaper content remains remarkably stable year over year, with 4 in 5 (83%) Canadians reading the news every week, either in print or digital format. In total, nearly 30 million newspapers are distributed across the country weekly in markets large and small.

Newspaper journalism continues to dominate the informational media we consume. (Consider how many times per day you're reading a story online that originated from a newspaper journalist or outlet.)

The reason for that is clear in the latest survey: editorial content in printed newspapers and their digital products remains the most trusted form of media. The survey showed that 60% of Canadians trust content that comes from newspapers (print or digital), compared to only 21% who put their trust in social media content. And that confidence also extends to newspaper advertising, creating a safe space for readers and advertisers.

While there's no question that digital remains the most popular delivery platform – mobile phones in particular – the survey hints at important trends. Younger Gen Z and Gen Y/Millennial readers have become strong consumers of newspaper content, and they're leading the charge when it comes to exploring alternate ways of accessing that content – including e-papers, podcasts and smart speakers.

In fact, younger generations are a prime driver of readership, with 89% of Gen Y/Millennials consuming newspaper content weekly across all platforms (led by mobile phone), followed by Gen Z at 87% (with phone usage slightly higher than Gen Y). That's higher than both general Boomer and Gen X readership.

But when it comes to a printed paper in the hand, Gen Z is now equalling the Boomer cohort for weekly readership.

"There seems to be a real resurgence of the tangible media. Many younger readers want to touch and feel something," explains News Media Canada director of marketing and research Kelly Levson. "Everybody's concerned that they're not reading, but the younger generations are reading across all platforms. They're reading primarily digital products but are still picking up the printed product."

Younger generations are also powering a shift in consumption habits, whether through e-papers (also referred to as PDF replicas or e-editions), podcasts or smart speakers. The good news for advertisers is that print ad dollars do double duty in e-papers, with one buy turning into both a print and digital ad.

Another revelation from the survey shows that 24% of readers are accessing content across the four platforms of print, computer, tablet and phone. That doesn't necessarily mean it's the same newspaper on all platforms, but it underlines how readers are regularly interacting with newspaper content in different ways.

Newspaper readers want to be connected. They want information, especially local information. The survey found that 92% of community newspaper print readers look there for local information and 49% for advertising, including flyers. Readers want to see where they're getting the best deals, and that information continues to be a strong driver when it comes to consumption. This is especially understandable given the inflationary pressure on categories such as grocery.

The most important takeaway from this year's research "is that newspapers continue to be a powerful advertising tool," sums up Levson. "Newspapers in print and in digital are an effective advertising medium, no matter who you're trying to reach. You want to reach those younger generations? They're reading newspapers. You want to reach the older generations? They've always read newspapers. Newspapers deserve a position in the media mix."

For more information and to access the full 2023 Newspapers 24/7 findings, visit: www.championthetruth.ca.

And to show your support for the work newspapers are doing to champion the truth in an era of misinformation and disinformation, download the free Champions font at: www.nationalnewspaperweek.ca.

A Celebration Of Life In Honor Of
Rodney Fluke 1953 - 2023

Saturday May 27, 2023
1:00 pm To 4:00 pm
The I00F Hall,
12389 County Road 18
Williamsburg, ON

Drop in for a visit with friends and family to share some of our favourite memories and stories of the wonderful husband, father, papa, brother, brother-in-law, uncle, and friend who is greatly missed

Singer Joanne Laurin welcomes a
Spring Concert titled Forever. Songs from the 50's 60's and 70's. Sunday, May, 28th, 2023 @ The Old Town Hall Doors open @ 100 p.m.Tickets 1 613 543 0695 and @ the door.

EORN Project update presented to SD&G United Counties

by Brandon Mayer

On April 24, an update was presented to the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry from Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN), a non-profit organization that aims to increase connectivity (including cellular and internet coverage) and quality of life in rural areas of Eastern Ontario.

EORN is a small organization with just 13 employees that was founded in 2010. Over the past 13 years, EORN has worked with large internet service and cellular service providers to increase the availability and coverage of these services in our area. This has included a 10-year Bell fibre contract, and more recently, a contract awarded to Rogers in 2021 as part of the Cell Gap Project.

Phase One was completed in 2015, with highlights in the report including:

- More than 5,500 kms of new fibre placed
- 63 business parks connected to fibre
- $175 million build with $260 million value
- Connected four First Nations reserves

As part of ongoing projects, new cell towers started being constructed last year, with construction ongoing. The overall goal is to achieve 99% cell coverage in all areas of Eastern Ontario where people live, work and travel on major roadways. Within this coverage, the goal is for 95% of coverage to be sufficient to offer "standard definition service level", and 85% of coverage to be sufficient for "high definition service level".

Most of the funding for the upgrade projects has been provided by a mix of the utility companies themselves, and the federal and provincial governments. The Counties' contribution has been about $575,000.

Currently, a project is underway to upgrade 312 existing cell towers to support LTE and 5G service, with about 297 already complete. In addition, 260 new sites are being built. The work is expected to be completed by 2025 and will meet or exceed project goals.

The Food Corner

by Paul Cormier, Salamanders of Kemptville

There is a plentiful supply of fresh-frozen shrimp available these days. Given the issues with the supply chain, post COVID, this is surprising but also welcome. This Shrimp Stir Fry is delicious, has a bit of a Mediterranean influence and is very healthy. This recipe is for four family members or guests and your goal is to have everything taste fresh from the stove top to the plate.

Shrimp Stir Fry

Ingredients

- 20 jumbo shrimp (5 shrimp per person you are serving), thawed and peeled
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced or 2 teaspoons of crushed garlic
- ¼ cup of chopped basil, fresh if possible
- ½ cup of chopped green onions
- A pound of fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup of diced tomatoes
- ½ cup of dry white wine
- 5 tablespoons of Feta or Parmesan cheese
- 1/8 cup of parsley flakes (optional)
- **Black pepper**

Preparation

- Bring the Canola oil up to medium heat in a largish pan
- Stir fry the garlic, basil, onions and mushrooms till sweated
- Add the tomatoes, white wine and cheese and stir fry for 4 or 5 minutes
- Add the shrimp and cook till they are pink (don't overcook)
- Add some black pepper to taste (just a bit, please)

Serve on a bed of piping hot Basmati rice and top with the parsley (if you wish). You might try a very chilled White Zinfandel as an accompaniment.

I'm sure you will enjoy this tasty dish that is so quick to put together. See you soon on the Salamanders Patio. Talk to me at pcormier@ranaprocess.com.

North Dundas Lodge No. 320

Front (left to right): Tom Clapp, Eric Shanz, Michal St. Amour, Martin Brewer, R.W. Bro. Michael Valois, Andy Naish, Gordon James
Back row: Jack Yourt, Harry Castle, Pat Eglinton, Bob Thirault

submitted by Tom Clapp

On Thursday April 6th, the North Dundas Masonic Lodge No. 320 welcomed the District Deputy Grand Master, R.W. Bro. Micheal Valois to their Lodge. The meeting was preceded by a banquet at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. The Lodge is located at 518 Church Street in Winchester.

Freemasonry is the oldest and largest world-wide fraternity of men. Although of a religious nature, Freemasonry is not a religion. It urges its members, however, to be faithful and devoted to their own religious beliefs. As a fraternity, freemasonry provides an opportunity to meet and enjoy friendly companionship. Anyone wishing to join the fraternity just has to ask a Mason. Contact anyone of the members listed in the picture above.

Thank you to Dairy Cares 4 SD&G and our local dairy farmers!

submitted by Jane Adams, WDMH Foundation

What a night! Thank you to the Dairy Producers of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, the event committee, sponsors, auction item donors, and everyone who attended Dairy Cares 4 SD&G on March 25th. $187,488.12 was raised for local hospitals in our region, including $62,996.04 for the WDMH Foundation!

The evening included entertainment, presentations, and a live auction of 18 items that raised about $29,000. Auctioneer Brandon Scheepers got the crowd bidding on everything from homemade bread to a pressure tank to a three-night stay at Mont Tremblant.

Committee Chair Ryan Wert summed up the reason for giving back to local hospitals: "In a world that always seems to be driven in the fast lane, how many times do we pass by our hospitals and take for granted their presence in our communities? Like our dairy farms, they run 24/7, 365. Rain or shine, winter weather, economic turbulence … the doors are always unlocked, the lights are always on, and a group of special people, often total strangers, are there to help navigate what could be some of the most exciting, and often most troubling, times of our lives. Words cannot express our gratitude to the Glengarry Memorial Hospital, Cornwall Community Hospital, and Winchester District Memorial Hospital for their roles in our communities and our personal lives."

"It truly was an evening where one hard-working industry showed appreciation and gave back to another! We are so grateful," says Kristen Casselman, Managing Director of the WDMH Foundation. "Proceeds will be directed to our General Equipment Fund. Many people are surprised to learn that the provincial government does not fund the purchase of medical equipment for Ontario hospitals. To help ensure that the WDMH care team has the right tools to provide excellent health care for patients, the WDMH Foundation works with donors who care about local health care and who want to make an impact. Last year, because of generous donors, the WDMH Foundation was able to help purchase 106 new pieces of equipment for WDMH."

EYE ON ACTIVISM

2SLGBTQIA+ Acronym

by Zara Zrudlo

In past articles, I've used the acronym 2SLGBTQIA+, but there are others too! Which version of the acronym is best to use, and what exactly does it mean? Here is a little extra info to make some of the terms clearer! Sexual Orientation has to do with whom a person is attracted, or not attracted, to. Gender identity is what gender people identify with, regardless of what gender they may appear to be on the outside. These things are independent of each other.

2S stands for Two Spirited. It is a term used by some Indigenous Peoples and it is exclusively for Indigenous Peoples. However, not all 2SLGBTQIA+ Indigenous peoples are Two Spirited. A Two Spirited person's body, in some cultures, houses two spirits, one male and one female. This term is not universally accepted by all Indigenous Peoples.

L stands for Lesbian, which generally means a woman who is attracted to women.

G stands for Gay. In the past, Gay has meant a man who is attracted to other men; however, now it is also used as an umbrella term for anyone who isn't heterosexual (straight).

B stands for Bisexual (Bi). Bisexual people are attracted to both male and female genders, or sometimes all genders. Bi folks can be more attracted a certain gender while still liking others, and that is still considered valid bisexuality.

T stands for transgender (Trans). It means someone whose sex assigned at birth (male or female) is not the gender that they are on the inside. Someone who was assigned male at birth might feel that they are a woman on the inside, or vice versa. To simplify, anyone whose gender identity doesn't match their sex assigned at birth could use the term trans if that feels best for them. This term also applies to people who don't fit into the binary genders (male/female).

Q generally stands for either queer or questioning. Queer is an umbrella term for everyone in the 2SLGTQIA+ community. However, some people don't use the word queer, so before you describe someone as queer, check with them first! Questioning is a term for someone who is still figuring out what their gender identity or sexual orientation is.

I stands for Intersex. Intersex is a general term for people whose reproductive anatomy doesn't fit within the boxes of male or female. This isn't unnatural, sometimes people are born this way. Intersex isn't a very well-known term, which can be very upsetting to Intersex people, especially since the training for doctors doesn't always include information about Intersex people.

A stands for Asexual (Ace), Aromantic (Aro) or occasionally (Ally).

Asexual is not just a sexual orientation, it's a spectrum. Ace people may feel no sexual attraction and still enjoy relationships, or not want to be in a relationship at all. Some may enjoy some types of sexual activity, but not others; it varies depending on the person. Being Ace doesn't mean that you haven't found the right person yet, it is a valid way to be.

Aromantic people may feel the 'standard' amount of sexual attraction, but they may feel little or no romantic attraction. Romantic attraction doesn't necessarily mean sexual activity.

Ally is the last thing that the 'A' commonly stands for. It has been debated, because allies to the community are not 2SLGBTQIA+ themselves. Whether or not they are in the acronym, they are amazingly important to 2SLGBTQIA+ health, and sense of belonging.

+ stands for all of the identities that aren't included in the acronym.

Sometimes how long the acronym is can raise the question of why it and all of these labels are important! The acronym is a way to talk about 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Other words to describe this community can be offensive to some, and this acronym, while complicated, can rarely be seen as offensive.

As for why all these labels are important, it's different for everyone. Some people choose not to use labels, but for some people these labels have been lifesavers. If you grow up in a transphobic household, questioning your gender identity or sexual orientation might lead to thinking you're unnatural, or to depression, or being suicidal. Finding a label and finding other people in the community can give people a sense of belonging. Labels can show people that there are others who are like them. There are many other variations of this acronym and there is no real 'right one' to use.

There are many other terms not included in this acronym! Some resources to find them are:

The Trevor Project (Website)

Seeing Gender by Iris Gottlieb (Book)

Zara Zrudlo is a homeschooled, fourteen year old resident of Kemtpville. They love writing, art, acting, reading and anything to do with music. Ever since they were little they've cared a lot about activism and social justice, and hoped to make a difference in the world. Zara has written two and a half novels, and ran a newspaper for their friends and family for three years. They love hanging out with their dogs and chickens and spending time imagining having dinner with various book characters.

Council update

North Dundas Council met for a regularly scheduled meeting on April 25. Councillor John Lennox was absent from the meeting after showing up and then subsequently leaving due to an emergency at home. All other members were present.

Council first heard delegations from various organizations, namely the Dundas Federation of Agriculture, Habitat for Humanity, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, and Stonehouse Vineyard. The presentation from Habitat for Humanity pointed out that the land used for building Habitat partnership homes comes from various sources, and that the donation of surplus Township land is one extremely helpful avenue to ensure that Habitat homes can be built locally. In the HFH 10-year build schedule, five years still have no land determined for building, and none of the five confirmed builds are set to take place in ND. Council accepted the report for consideration pending more research from Township staff.

The presentation from Stonehouse Vineyard sought advice and advocacy for a goal of eliminating an LCBO mark up and wine levy for non-VQA Ontario wines. The VQA is the "Vintner's Quality Alliance", and the presentation pointed out that the mark up and wine levy are "punishing and discriminatory" for non-VQA wineries who still use 100% Ontario grapes, and that this is inconsistent with Ontario's goal of supporting local and being "Open for Business".

Presenter Craig MacMillian further pointed out that a solution of "joining VQA" may seem like an easy fix to the problem but is simply not feasible for many producers for reasons such as "cold climate grapes" not being recognized by VQA. While it is unusual for a business to address Council over a provincial matter outside of Council's control, the purpose of the Stonehouse Vineyard presentation was to ask for Council's "backing" in opposition to the LCBO mark up and wine levy. Craig confirmed that there has been immense backing of the opposition, including from the Council of North Glengarry, MPP Nolan Quinn, and other area politicians. North Dundas Council moved to support the opposition movement.

Routine business such as a part time wage schedule amendment and passing of a motion to increase the number of sick days for Township staff from five days to eight days annually came next. The Township's vacation policy was also updated to make staff compensation packages more attractive and in line with other municipalities to help in hiring and retaining staff. Other routine approvals followed, including the designation of Bike Night, Dairyfest, and the Meet Me on Main Street events as "events of municipal significance" so that alcohol can be sold.

The last major issue discussed is one that will inevitably affect recreation for locals this summer. The Township was unsuccessful in hiring enough applicants for lifeguard positions to staff both the Winchester and Chesterville public pools full time. Council was tasked with deciding between two options – opening both pools at reduced hours, or opening only the Winchester pool full time.

The Mayor and members of Council took turns emphasizing the challenges that the Township has faced in hiring staff for summer recreation programs including the pool programs. Council ultimately moved to open both the Winchester and Chesterville pools on a part time basis this summer.

The most recent Council meeting took place on May 2, too recent to be covered in the current print edition of the Times. Further highlights from Council will be available in future issues.

WSC spring season begins

submitted by Sarah Lewis

The Winchester Skating Club's spring skating season has begun! About 90 skaters are taking this opportunity to extend their skating season. This is also the first time that adult skaters from our club have joined the spring skate. The Sam Ault arena removes its ice after our regular season ends in March, so spring skating is at the Finch Community Arena. It is a fun experience to skate at a different arena, but because we have been having our spring skate at this arena for so many years, it feels like our second skating home.

Spring skating runs from April to June and we skate twice a week instead of three times a week like we do during the regular season. We still have formal lessons, but it is a more relaxed environment. There are smaller groups during spring skating and this helps create a different feeling on the ice too. The coaches focus on helping us improve specific skills or polish our ice dances and we have an ice dance partner working with us too.

Spring skating is an opportunity to continue working on the skills we were close to mastering at the end of the regular season. A lot of tests are held during spring skating and so far this season we have already had skaters pass about 10 tests with more to come, including a high test day. If we did not do spring skating, we would have to wait for September to test and since most of us do not skate all summer, we would not be ready for the tests until the end of September. The spring skating season also allows us to keep up our flexibility and physical conditioning for an additional two months and that makes returning to regular skating in September easier. It also means we have two more months with our skating friends to share laughs, celebrate successes, and support each other.

Skating twice a week during spring skating helps out high school students who are often working on big assignments and preparing for exams at the end of the school year. It allows us to spend more time on our school work but also makes sure we have physical activity that reduces stress and lets us focus on something more fun than math and history. For me, one of the side benefits of spring skating in Finch is the arena being in the same building as the SDG library branch and a trip to the library is always a good time!

WDMH Foundation Murder Mystery Dinner

submitted by Jane Adams, WDMH Foundation

Do you love Downton Abbey? Do you love playing Clue? Then we've got a great evening planned for you!

Join us for the 1920s Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre on June 3rd, 2023

Laurie McRae-Bingley spends her days as a kindergarten teacher and her nights as an actor, writer, and director. And she sees a lot of parallels. "Both take a lot of energy!", she laughs.

Now, Laurie and her Murder on the Funny Side Productions theatre troupe are bringing their talents – and lots of fun - to the WDMH Foundation's 1920s Murder Mystery Night. It will be held on June 3rd, 2023, at Matilda Community Hall in Dixon's Corners.

Laurie's original play is entitled "Clues Lead to Murder at the Down Town Abbey" (© 2016) and it is sure to entertain all of the guests, even those pulled into the show. "I want everyone to have a good time and be comfortable," says Laurie. "We have a few surprises planned for those who choose to get involved. For everyone else, the clues will guide you!"

The theatre troupe includes 6 local actors playing 10 characters. They are supported by a lighting crew and a runner who keep everything on track. "We are all excited to finally bring this show back to life again for the first time in three years," sums up Laurie. "It's a fundraiser near and dear to our hearts because many of us, and our family members, have been cared for at the Winchester Hospital." In fact, Laurie's two grandchildren were born at WDMH!

The event has an upscale 1920s theme. Starting with a cocktail hour, the main meal will be a delicious plated dinner which includes chicken and ham by Traiteur La Bonne Bouffe Catering.

During the event, there will be a live auction with local auctioneer Brandon Scheepers, a silent auction, raffles and games, and a free photo booth. Fabulous music will be provided by Ice – No Slice. Proceeds will support the WDMH Foundation's Family Care Fund – supporting families just like yours.

"We hope everyone will come to this special event in support of our local hospital," sums up Kristen Casselman, Managing Director. "This is the last WDMH gala we are planning for a while, so if you've always wanted to come, this is your chance. We can't wait to welcome you!"

Tickets are $105 each. Purchase online at https://wdmhfoundation1920smurdermystery.eventbrite.ca or contact Justine Plummer at 613-774-2422 ext. 6172 or jplummer@wdmh.on.ca.