

2024

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See page 2 for more information.

REMEMBERING RUTH TOLLER VISTAS CO-FOUNDER AND CO-EDITOR

By Ernie McArthur, VISTAS President

Ruth Toller was witty, intelligent, active, kind, generous and of strong religious faith. More than 40 years ago she co-founded and co-edited VISTAS newspaper and now, sadly, in her 90th year, has passed on.

I knew Ruth as a member of St. Timothy's Presbyterian Church and, during those 20 years, the twinkle in her eye, and the wry smile, never left her. An active church participant, she was a Church Elder, taught Sunday School, and entertained us at regular church talent nights.

As you read VISTAS, keep in mind that you and VISTAS owe it all to Ruth, to her co-founders, and to Celine Tower. To their combined imagination, community spirit and drive. I often wonder how they were able to find 200 carrier volunteers but, thankfully, they did just that.

Ruth was born in Toronto, graduated from the University of Toronto, spent time in Sudbury teaching, returned to Toronto, married her husband George, then moved to Ottawa. She raised a family, returned

to teaching, and found time to ski, travel extensively, canoe the Yukon and many other rivers, cycle in Beijing, hike, play the piano, sing in choirs, and deliver for Meals on Wheels.

Ruth will be missed very much by family and friends, and by all at VISTAS. Thank you, Ruth, for helping to bring us VISTAS and for initiating the 40-plus years of community involvement upon which VISTAS depends. That is quite a legacy. When you think about it, each one of the many hundreds of persons who over 40 years have supported VISTAS in so many different ways, has Ruth and her co-founder, and Celine, to thank for the opportunity to get involved in our community.

Some time ago, when George died, I wrote a VISTAS story about their joint canoeing adventures, including their paddling honeymoon on the Yukon River. I concluded that story by wondering where George goes now to paddle his canoe. Well, Ruth knows the answer.



Ruth Toller died peacefully at Lord Lansdowne Residence in Ottawa on January 6, 2024, 10 days before her 90th birthday.

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SUBMISSIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

Articles submitted for consideration for publication should be 800 words or less and emails and letters 500 words or less. Pictures submitted should be 300 DPI resolution.

DEADLINE: 15th of the month prior to publication
Email: Editor@vistas-news.ca

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2024

CELINE TOWER GRANT



\$1000 (CAD) toward first year undergraduate studies in Writing, Journalism or Communications



APPLY NOW

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May 31

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THE 2024 CELINE TOWER GRANT

Once again, our beloved Celine Tower's legacy continues in the form of the Celine Tower Grant. As editor of VISTAS for over 30 years, Celine supported young people through our community paper, seeing them as the future. In her memory, VISTAS offers this grant each year to support youth entering journalism or a similar field of study.

Are you a high school student from the VISTAS community pursuing undergraduate studies in Writing, Journalism or Communications in September 2024? You may qualify to apply for the Celine Tower Grant in the amount of \$1,000 (CAD) to go towards the cost of your studies. Please note: applicants must currently reside or study in the Alta Vista/Canterbury/Elmvale Acres/Ellwood area.

In addition to the application form, indicating the intended program of studies and school, applicants will submit a well-written, newspaper-worthy essay of 500-800 words, and a resumé, highlighting any community involvement or relevant interests. The VISTAS Board may also invite qualifying applicants to participate in an interview before awarding the grant.

Please email Valda.vistas@gmail.com for more information or to request an application. No repeat applications from previous winners, please.

Application deadline: May 31, 2024

VISTAS Vision

The VISTAS community newspaper is in its fourth decade of production. We aim to provide interesting articles about your friends, neighbours, activities available in the community, and items of concern to the Alta Vista area. We encourage involvement and discussion from our readers and look forward to reading your emails, letters and submitted articles. Your VISTAS team will do its utmost to continue to provide a quality newspaper which will be an enjoyable read for your home.

VISTAS' Delivery Schedule

2024	VISTAS Delivery Date
March Issue	February 28, 2024
April Issue	April 3, 2024

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

West Side Story of Halifax Street

In December 2022 I parked my car on the west side of Halifax Street and tried to step up the slope to the sidewalk. This slope extends from Walkley Road to Saunderson Street.. To use one of the two driveways to reach the sidewalk I would have to walk on the busy street. I kept slipping and a car stopped, the driver got out to help me. It was embarrassing. I'm a fully mobile 79 years young woman. Wheelchair access is impossible.

At the end of my evening, I returned to my car. I expected to slide down the slope to my car but ended up sliding onto the road. Thank goodness only my pride suffered but when I returned home, I was determined to do something about what had happened. As a subscriber to The Council on Aging in Ottawa, I knew they had just launched the Snow Mole Report 2022 – Winter Walking in Ottawa.

Mary Haller, Co-chair, Pedestrian Safety and Walkability Committee, was my first contact who agreed that something should be done. She referred my concern to the City. I'll spare the reader the full response because it was completely negative, but it's available if you would like to read it. The highlight is the sentence that the "maximum running slope gradient (5%) for exterior paths of travel provide an accessible connection for all users"!!

My next step was reaching out to my City Councillor, Marty Carr. Her assistant was sympathetic but, in the end, nothing was expected to be done for four years.

After this I contacted Urbandale Corp. because they occupy all, if not most of the property. I was told that they don't own this strip of land. It belongs to the City of Ottawa. This would be my last hope. I once lived in the Canterbury Apartments and I was a happy tenant. I read that Urbandale is still guided by the principles of integrity, fairness and forward thinking.

I thought I had no other resources, but I was wrong. While at my dentist's office, I picked up a copy of VISTAS and was instantly reminded of the strength of community. I'm not expecting major changes but perhaps a few four-foot posts, brightly painted, would be a start. At the very least it would offer some support.

Thank you for reading. Perhaps you have more ideas. Please share them.

Carol A. Laity

Memories of the Alta Vista skating rink

Re: "Meet the RinkRatz of the Alta Vista outdoor rink" by Ingrid de Vries, January 2024

What a pleasure to read about the Alta Vista rink in the recent issue of VISTAS – it brought back many fond memories of my childhood growing up in Alta Vista.

I remember spending countless childhood hours at the rink (1955-1966).

It consisted of a large hockey rink with boards and the rink was completely surrounded by an oval ice surface for non-hockey skating. At the south end was a large change "shack" with one half for the girls and one half for the boys, and each half had a large wood burning pot-bellied stove for warmth, and drying mittens.

The rink was maintained by full-time City of Ottawa staff.

There were countless hours of shinny hockey as well as organized leagues organized by the Alta Vista Recreation Centre.

The Alta Vista neighbourhood was second to none, and the rink was an important element.

Thanks for the memories.

Bill Reid



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Thank you to our distributors for contributing to our community in this way. Your help makes VISTAS possible.

Please note: Opinions and information published in VISTAS through letters we receive, community and association news or individual columns, do not necessarily reflect the opinion of this newspaper. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

VISTAS Volunteer Carriers Needed

For West of Haig

- Anoka, 35 papers
- Bloor, Penhill, Crestwood, 56 papers
- Edge Hill, 58 papers
- Grasmere, 39 papers
- Heron (Alta Vista to Greenbelt), 13 papers
- Lower Crocus (Niagara to Blossom), 21 papers
- Mimosa, 30 papers
- Neighbourhood Way, 35 papers
- Oxbow and Linda Lane, 19 papers
- Pixley, 60 papers
- Portland, 34 papers
- Renova, 55 papers
- Station Boulevard, 40 papers

For East of Haig

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Avenue Q	Elderfield	Orchid
Avenue R	Elsett	Othello
Avenue S	Erinbrook	Pleasant Park
Avenue T	Fairdale	Plessner
Avenue U	Folkstone	Pullen
Balharrie	Furby	Russell
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Blackstone	Glendevon	Saunderson (Halifax to Pleasant Park)
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Browning	Haig	Shelley
Caverley	Hamlet	Shelburne
Chadburn	Haney	Smyth (Dauphin to Russell)
Chaucer	Hastings, Edgecombe, Halstead	Sonata
Connery	Heaton	Southvale
Cornish	Howland	St Laurent (Walkley to Russell)
Corry	Holt	Susan
Dakota	Joliffe	Tilson
Devon	Keats	Tupper
Dickens	Lemay	Weston
Dorval	Magnus	Weyburn
Drew	Martha	

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What would it cost to have electrical lines buried in Alta Vista?

Re: “Hydro Ottawa makes every effort to provide reliable service to its customers” by Julie Lupinacci, January 2024

Dear Editor,

I note with interest the letter from Ms. Lupinacci on behalf of Hydro Ottawa. I have a few points I want to make in response.

The increased attention paid to forestry programs and equipment inspections by the electricity provider is certainly helpful and noted. In the end, it is their job – and our expectation as paying customers – to see that these fundamental maintenance services are done adequately to prevailing conditions.

I take issue with a comparison of performance limited to other areas of Ontario. To be frank, that comparison baseline sets the bar quite low. Outside of the high-density Greater Toronto Area, what other place in Ontario has an urban population of one million people to compare against? If none, what other areas of Ontario are we comparing ourselves to then?

Let us be real. This is 2024 and Ottawa is a one million citizens capital of a major Western country. So, with that preamble, our comparisons of electricity grid reliability should be against the capitals of Western countries, and preferably countries that know a thing or two about winds, rains and snow. How well then are we faring against Copenhagen, Stockholm, Warsaw, Prague or Berlin? Knowing people who live in those cities, I can tell you that nobody there remembers ever being without power for a week.

What is the real reason Alta Vista – a relatively well-off part of the city – ends up being in this situation only too frequently now? The reason is one and only one and is not mentioned in Ms. Lupinacci’s letter: unlike other parts of the city and many capitals around the world, we have a rural delivery system in the middle of an urban area.

The system of wooden posts treated against rot inserted into the ground along our streets is a 1920s reality. We use a 100-year-old concept instead of delivering electricity through a cabling system in the ground. The reason why this is not being proposed is the cost.

When new housing developments are scheduled to open to new construction, the preparatory work involves creating the appropriate infrastructure. The cost of doing so per modern standards is calculated into the various development permits. It is also cheaper to build ground systems when there are no homes or roads around yet. That is why we see no wooden posts when we walk in some newer parts of Barrhaven or Orleans.

Does this mean we should pretend that nothing else can be done except trimming trees more frequently and monitoring wooden posts for damage? I don’t think so. I would prefer to know. Maybe it could be an extra one-time payment for each household or an added line item on the electricity bill. Can we have that discussion?

Michael Paduch

OUR COMMUNITY

PLAYFAIR RINK IS OPEN !



Thanks to the dedicated rink volunteers, the Playfair rink was up and running in January - hoping for a good season! Photo credit: Shawn O’Connor.

OUR COMMUNITY

LOCAL TEENS SWEEP THE PODIUMS AT REGIONAL BIATHLON CHAMPIONSHIPS

By Lt Anh-Thu Dang

In November, local teens from 2332 Major E.J.G. Holland VC Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps once again showcased their physical fitness and marksmanship prowess at the Regional Biathlon Championships held at Canadian Forces Base Borden.

After successfully qualifying at the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Area competition, the biathlon team, consisting of cadets Evelyn and William Budzinski, Noah Clancy, Haleema Raji, Lolade Ogunmekan and Skye Sigman, was led by Captain Cory Lohnes to represent the area at this final level of competition.

Biathlon, typically a winter Olympic sport combining cross-country skiing and rifle shooting, was a run and shoot format for this competition, replacing skiing with running. The competitors participated in two races: the team Sprint Race and the individual Pursuit Race. In the Sprint Race, the athletes each ran a 3K circuit of one-kilometre loops broken up by two bouts of precision shooting requiring athletes to hit five 45mm targets from a 10-metre range. Sunday's Pursuit Race then staggered the start for each competitor based on their individual performance during the previous day's Sprint finish ranking repeating the same running loop and shooting sequence, but having to complete it four or five times as they race to still be the first athlete across the finish line despite which position they started from.

At this competition, these local athletes were definitely prepared. Corporal Budzinski remarked that "after months of completing our training program with Captain Lohnes and focusing on strength training and running, we competed to the best of our abilities at the competition." Competing in her second regional competition and bringing home yet another gold medal with her partner Skye Sigman for being the fastest female team in the province, she certainly proved that practice does make perfect. These female cadets, including Lolade Ogunmekan, dominated the podium also earning both the gold and silver medals in the Junior Female Individual category!

Corporal William Budzinski and teammate Noah Clancy secured their own gold medals in the Open Male Unit Team category. Both also owned the podium in the individual category claiming medals for being the second and third fastest Overall Senior Male biathletes in Ontario. In total, these local cadets proudly brought home eight medals, with more than half being gold!

Sharing his aspirations, Corporal Budzinski stated that "while my biathlon goal in the Cadet Program is to win gold in the Individual category, my long-term goal for this season is to compete at the Ontario Winter Games. And then the Canada Winter Games in 2025."



From left to right: Cpl Sigman, Cpl Budzinski, Cpl Budzinski, and Cdt N. Clancy with their medals following the awards ceremony. Photo Credit: Steve Budzinski

"Helping youth work toward achieving their goals is what the Cadet Program is all about," offered Captain Lohnes, the team's coach and volunteer with 2332 Major E.J.G. Holland VC Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps. "And it makes me so proud and inspired to see these local athletes recognized for their hard work and determination."

Now we're raising funds to support our incredible biathlon team, as they compete at the Ontario Winter Games in Thunder Bay at the end of February. Let's help our biathletes continue to shine at the games! Any donations would be greatly appreciated: gofund.me/c5272734.

Competitions like these offered through the Canadian Cadet Program provide opportunities for youth to push their physical fitness limits and develop their leadership and team-building skills. This free-to-join Army Cadet Program is open to youth between the ages of 12–18 and is offered locally every Wednesday night at 2100 Walkley Rd. Check out their website www.2332cadets.ca for more information.



From left to right: Major Bonacci, Cpl Sigman, Cpl Buzinski, Cpl Budzinski, LCol Morrisette, CWO Paquette, Cdt Clancy, MCpl Ogunmekan, Cdt Raji, Capt Lohnes, and CWO Walkden. The biathlon team was presented with their Stage 3 Biathlon Pins by Lt-Col Morrisette, Commanding Officer, and CWO Paquette, Regional Chief Warrant Officer of the Regional Cadet Support Unit (Central) headquarters. Photo Credit: Lt Dang

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“February is short and very sweet.”
— Charmaine J Forde

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR THE WOMEN OF DEMPSEY

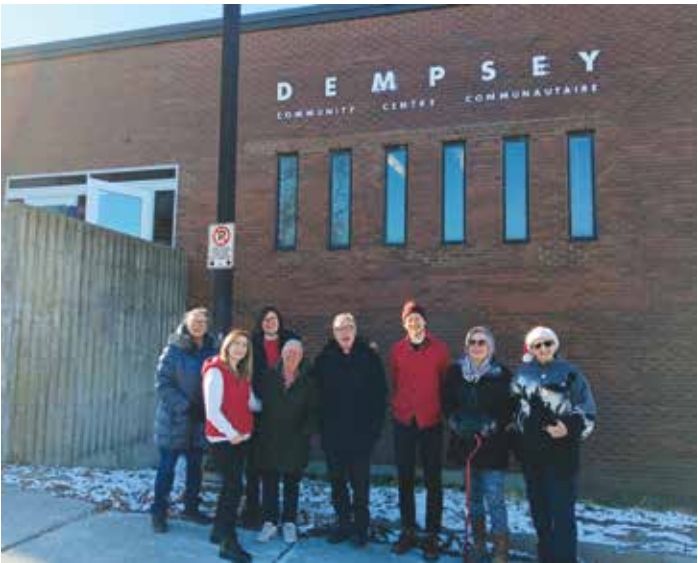
By Lois Wynn

For Christmas 2023, St. Aidan’s Anglican Church teamed up with St. Thomas the Apostle Anglican Church to, once again, prepare gift bags for the women staying at the Dempsey women’s shelter.

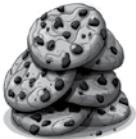
This past year, the need was greater than ever. The Dempsey shelter went from housing 60 women the previous year to now housing 90 women. We were also informed that many more women were put into a new shelter recently opened at the Heron Community Centre, over 200 women at the two shelters at last count.

The two churches stepped up to prepare 90 gift bags for the Dempsey shelter. Along with parishioners, other community members joined in with donations to help. The generosity was so great that, although we could not prepare gift bags for the ladies at the Heron Centre, we were able to make donations of needed items to share with them. Our City Councillor Marty Carr’s office helped with the distribution of these items at the Heron Centre.

Many thanks to all who participated in this outreach project.



Volunteers from St. Aidan’s and St. Thomas the Apostle Anglican Churches. Photo credit: Dempsey women’s shelter




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**Family Day
Pancake Breakfast
& Skate!**

Bring your skates and helmets and join us on the ice on February 19, 2024, from 8:15 to 10:15 AM at Jim Durrell Recreation Centre (1265 Walkley Road).

Pancakes and beverages will be served from 8:00 to 10:00 AM!

Please RSVP to jfraser.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org or 613-736-9573.





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OUR COMMUNITY

Friends & Family of Jane Berlin

With support from the Alta Vista Community Association & Greenspace Stewardship Committee, City Councillor Marty Carr, MPP John Fraser and MP David McGuinty.

As a tribute to Jane we are having a community fundraiser to purchase a memorial bench for this true community leader. Jane Berlin was a champion who saved much of our greenspace from being developed...she embraced our community and made a difference. Her too short life and big heart was extraordinary in so many ways.



Jane Berlin speaking at the WRENS Way dedication surrounded by the trees and greenspace she so cherished and sought to protect. Photo credit: Gillian Godwin



Jane Berlin, a great community presence, died after a sudden illness on Saturday, November 11.

The bench will be located on Grasshopper Hill near a new Plaque and Red Maple tree that honours all those who served Canada in WWII. This 'Living Memorial' renovation project, which Jane fought for, was completed before she passed, and there isn't a more appropriate place to honour her memory.

Contributions can be made by cash or cheque made out to 'AVCA Jane's Bench' and mailed or hand delivered to Gillian Godwin, 1849 Camborne Crescent, Ottawa K1H 7B6.

If you prefer to remain anonymous, please indicate in the memo line on the front of the cheque.

If you prefer to send a direct cash transfer call the # below for details.

AVCA will hold the monies in trust until the bench has been installed. If donations exceed the \$6,000 required, the monies would be used to create Jane's wildflower garden in WRENS Way.

For further information please contact Gillian 613 737 0508.

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE
VACANT UNIT TAX IN 2024

By Victoria Askin and John Langstone, AVCA Planning Committee

The Vacant Unit Tax (VUT) is now in its second tax year and the City will be making a comprehensive report of the 2023 results available online this fall. While numbers will not be finalized until the audits and appeals are completed, one preliminary result is that 2,836 units were deemed vacant because the Property Status Declarations were not received.

So in this year’s cycle, as in year one, the most urgent reminder is to ensure that your annual Property Status Declaration is submitted by the due date, March 21, 2024, and failing that, then definitely by the final deadline, April 30, 2024. If the April 30 deadline is missed, the home will be deemed vacant and the tax of 1 per cent of the assessed property value of the property (\$5,000 for a property assessed at \$500,000) will be charged and collected.

There have been enhancements to the declaration process itself this year and for most of us it will be simple and quick. An email is received providing a link to a declaration that is now already populated with the owner’s data, and after that, answering the few check-box questions takes only a few minutes. For those whose circumstances are less straightforward, or who cannot use this link method, use *Ottawa.ca/VUT*, your MyServiceOttawa account, or call to make your declaration over the phone at 613-580-2444.

After the declaration, the possible next step in the VUT process is an audit, typically begun by a communication from the City requesting supporting documentation for the declaration. In the VUTs first year, it has been reported that 1,524 declarations were selected for audit.

Declarations are subject to audit for up to two years, so the City recommends that documentation be kept. It’s a long list of possible documents though, and the City may require others not on the list, so this could be onerous.

We are alerted to the possibility of an audit, and its possible consequences, in the Declaration itself – the required check-box attestation: “I understand that I may be asked to provide further information and evidence to support my appeal at a later date. Failing to do so, providing false declarations or false information will result in fines of up to \$10,000 per offence on conviction.”

In the VUT process as a whole, the potential costs and consequences associated with noncompliance are substantial, and potentially serious.

- \$250 for missing the March 21st due date
- \$4,125 for the 1 per cent of assessed value VUT (this is an example amount suggested by the City)
- \$500 - \$10,000 fine for noncompliance with the VUT
- 1.25 per cent interest per month penalty for nonpayment
- A lien on the property for the unpaid VUT
- The tax sale process

There is an appeal process, however, both for properties that were deemed vacant because the Declaration of Property Status was not submitted in time, and also for properties the City declares vacant. As with the declaration, deadlines are crucial. The maximum time to submit the first-level appeal is 90 days. If that deadline is missed, there is no further recourse within this process. Note also that if a property is deemed or declared vacant, the tax and any penalties must be paid up front even though an appeal is pending. Taxes and penalties are refunded if the appeal is successful.

Perhaps the most important thing to know about the VUT, for most of us, is that principal residences are not subject to the VUT. So, for owners living in their own homes, the only requirement is the Declaration confirming that. To be clear, the 184-day vacancy rule does not apply to principal residences, and the City has stated that principal residences retain their principal residence status even if owners leave them for extended periods such as for travel or work.


In addition to the exemption for principal residences, there are also six exemptions in the VUT where non-principal residence properties that are vacant for more than 184 days are nevertheless not required to pay the tax for that year.

Exemptions are provided for vacancies in cases of the sale of a property, where there is a court or government order prohibiting occupation, where an owner has died, where an owner has been in hospital or care, for properties under construction or renovation, for construction or renovation situations in combination with tenanted periods, and for cottage rentals.

The VUT itself should be referred to for particulars of any exemptions that are relevant to individual circumstances. But one exemption in particular may be problematic and is worth highlighting.

For sales of property that close in the January 1 to April 30 declaration period, it’s the vendor who completes the declaration because only they know the circumstances in the previous year. It is the purchaser, however, who will be responsible if the declaration is not filed, and for any VUT tax that is owed. The City has reached out to lawyers and real estate professionals with suggestions, but it’s unclear whether following these suggestions will result in complete protection for the buyer.


Beyond the impact the VUT has on individual residential property owners, is the question of how well it meets its goal of decreasing vacancies and increasing the housing supply. We should expect this fall’s comprehensive report on 2023 to provide answers to this question. We already know though that the number of vacancies is much greater than expected. The City estimated there would be 1,653 vacant units in year one. In fact, even apart from units deemed vacant, and pending finalization of audits and appeals – the City has declared 3,268 units vacant.



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If I can ever be of assistance to you, on any federal matter, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Mon bureau vous renseigne sur les services offerts par le gouvernement du Canada, notamment:

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Si jamais je peux vous aider, n'hésitez pas à contacter mon bureau.

The Honourable | L'honorable **David McGuinty**, MP | Député

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OUR COMMUNITY

HEROES OF HERON EMERGENCY FOOD CENTRE

By Lynn Sherwood

In the January edition of VISTAS, our Heroes were the 104th Scout Group, who were inspired to collect donations for HEFC following the example of Milla and Madden Rousseau, also HEFC Heroes. Our Hero for February, Caroline Mitchell, retired from her work as a civil servant in September 2023 and began looking for a new retirement project. She was inspired to contact HEFC to ask about volunteering after reading our Heroes column in VISTAS.

When a volunteer position became open, she was contacted by our Executive Coordinator, Louisa Simms, who asked her to help bag up individual portions of bulk items for our clients. Caroline quickly graduated to the front counter, where she began assisting clients personally in early November. Caroline speaks three languages, English, French (which is helpful for families from West Africa and the Middle East), and some Spanish. Caroline sees the need firsthand and says she wants readers to know that: “It’s appalling that a country of our wealth has so many people coming to food banks.”

In November, between 60 and 70 families arrived at HEFC every day, which works out to one family being served every 2.5 minutes, for a total of 2,324 clients in 736 households during the full month. In December, we saw an even greater number, with 2,452 clients in 742 households arriving during the month, even though we were open two days less than in November. Because of the increased number of families, we opened

a second registration line, so that two staff could register clients at the same time, speed up the process of getting food, and reduce wait times for our clients. This of course placed additional pressure on the volunteers who were providing food for the clients, since our workspace remained unchanged. Caroline adapted to the chaos admirably even though she was new to her role. Thank you, Caroline, for pitching in on short notice to help us provide food, in a relatively efficient manner, for the largest influx of clients in our 36-year history.

When Caroline learned that we were recruiting new board members with useful skills, she stepped forward. Caroline has a background in communications and advertising, and an interest in policy development. She has been involved with other volunteer boards, and as a parishioner at St. Genevieve Catholic Church, she is aware of the private refugee sponsorship initiative through the federal government. She understands something of the lived experience of the folks who show up at HEFC and wants to help us address their needs in our current social context.

Our organization, like many other charitable organizations, was founded nearly 40 years ago, and was structured to provide volunteer services to about half the number of people we are now serving, and who were experiencing food insecurity in a rather different society. Caroline is committed to helping the board of HEFC develop the programs, policies and procedures that will assist us in responding to the new realities to which we all must adapt. HEFC remains committed to our founding values of providing high-quality nutritious food in a respectful environment to all who come to us for assistance, and we welcome Caroline’s expertise as we move forward.

Members of the Board of HEFC are happy to share information about the service we, all together, provide for our community, and to make presentations at community events.

Call us at 613-737-9090 or email us at hefc-info@rogers.com for more information.

Check out: hefc-info@rogers.com

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/HeronFoodCentre

On X: [@HEFC.ca@HeronfoodCentre](https://twitter.com/HEFC.ca)



We also have a QR code to simplify donations to our program.

Heron Emergency Food Centre is located at 1480 Heron Road and is open four days a week to provide emergency food to people in need in Ottawa South.

FEBRUARY WISH LIST

We welcome cash and food donations including tuna, canned vegetables, canned tomato sauce, canned soup, chickpeas, kidney beans, cereal and snacks for children, feminine hygiene products, and personal care items including toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, and shampoo.



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martycarrottawa.ca

The Ward 18 Office Team

Please reach out to us at anytime by email at marty.carr@ottawa.ca or by phone at 613-580-2488.

Ward 18 Office Hours

Office hours have started up again! Appointments in the new year will be hosted on the first Monday of every month at Jim Durrell Recreation Centre (1265 Walkley Road). If you would like to book an appointment, please email my office at marty.carr@ottawa.ca or call us at 613-580-2488. Appointments are available on a first call, first served basis. I look forward to meeting with you!

Upcoming office hours:

Monday February 5th from 10a.m. to 12p.m.

Supportive Housing Community Forum – February 7th

My office will be hosting a Supportive Housing Community Forum on February 7th from 6:30p.m. to 7:30p.m. at Jim Durrell Recreation Centre (1265 Walkley Road). If you are looking to better understand supportive housing, please register for this event by emailing heather.moore@ottawa.ca. Spaces are limited!

Bank Street Renewal Information Session

As construction progresses on the Bank St. Renewal project, the City is hosting an information session. This will take place on February 13th from 6:30-8:30 at Jim Durrell Recreation Centre. Detailed design drawings will be on display for your review and staff will be onsite to answer any questions. There will not be a formal presentation at this open house. Please attend at your leisure. This information session will cover phase 1 from Riverside Dr. to Collins Ave.

More information about the project can be found at ottawa.ca/BankStreet

Vacant Unit Tax Reminder

All residential property owners will be required to register the status of their property during the previous year; if no declaration is made, the property will be deemed vacant and will be subject to the tax.

To declare a property status, please visit the City of Ottawa's website at the following address: <https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/taxes/property-taxes/vacant-unit-tax/declare-property-status>


Heron Gate Winter Fun Day


The annual Heron Gate Winter Fun Day is just around the corner! You are invited to join us for a day full of fun activities on Saturday, February 10th from 11a.m. to 1:30p.m. at Sandalwood Park (2850 Sandalwood Drive). There will be skating at the rink, sleigh rides, a campfire, and marshmallow roasting! This event will be fun for the entire family! A special thank you to all of the volunteers who are making this event possible.

Stay Connected

Website: Please visit my website www.martycarrottawa.ca. I invite you to visit the site regularly to find out about the latest news and events, community resources, and information about what's happening at Council and at the City of Ottawa. Your feedback is important, so let us know what you think so we can continually improve our information sharing.

Social Media: I invite you to follow me on my social media channels for frequent updates and more informal news and views:

 Facebook (Marty Carr - Alta Vista/Quartier Alta Vista)

 Instagram (martycarrottawa)

OUR COMMUNITY

ELLWOOD UPDATE

By Norman Payne, President Ellwood's Ridgemont Community Association



Skinny marinky dinky dink, Skinny marinky do
Come and skate on our rink!

Finally, we got enough snow to get our community rink going. The snow came late but too much, too fast, overwhelming our equipment's ability to cope. Resident Dave Lidster swooped in with his truck and was a huge help in preparing the ice surface. Thank you, Dave!

This leads to inviting our Ellwood residents and your families and friends to our Grand Winter Carnival on Saturday, February 10th from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at Frank Licari Park. Skate for fun and exercise, play hockey, kids can use the puddle rink, and play ice frisbee; there is even a nice field house to lace up and take a warm break. As well, hot chocolate, coffee, Timmy's treats, music and more. And there will be a Memorial Cup Tournament.

Utility pole project – 19 new poles have been placed

You will doubtless have been entertained by the activity of the utility pole replacement operation in Ellwood, with massive cranes gingerly lowering poles into small, neat, precisely vacuumed-out holes. A total of 19 new poles have been placed, and here are some interesting details about them.




- Most of the older poles have been in place for 50 or more years, astonishingly one in the park was only buried to a depth of three feet.
- The new poles are significantly higher than the old ones – for several reasons. There are new clearance standards requiring more distance over higher new homes, higher chimneys and high tree tops, as well as extra room for maintenance or work on home roofs and along property lines. Now, trees around poles are trimmed further back to allow for growth of two or three years before they have to be re-trimmed.
- Some of the new poles are composed of engineered composite, which can flex almost halfway out and snap right back.

- Interestingly, 30 per cent of all the poles in Ellwood are owned by Bell, which prefers to use red pine, whereas many of the others are made of cedar.
- The reason you currently see the new pole very close to the original pole is that the original is not removed until all the utilities and services are re-laid and hooked up – then the crew will return in the spring and remove them.
- The new poles will remain in place for at least 50 to 80 years. You will also have noticed the anchor wires and features are more elaborate than before – this is to prevent their toppling during the increasingly bad storms with violent crosswinds we are experiencing and to comply with the new higher standards.



New utility poles have been placed beside the older poles. Photo Credit: Gary Howard

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OUR COMMUNITY

THE A-FRAME CHURCHES OF ALTA VISTA

By Chris Wiebe



Alta Vista is blessed with a wide array of worship spaces, from over a dozen Christian churches to synagogues, mosques, and Sikh or Buddhist temples. Curiously, when it comes to the churches, only Rideau Park United (constructed 1954-55) took up a traditional style, a Gothic Revival blend of brick and stone, with most churches opting for the stridently modern: consider the octagonal Resurrection of Our Lord, Sainte-Geneviève’s radically concave roofline, or the angular geometries of St-Thomas d’Aquin. This was edgy, enthusiastic architecture from churches eager to express the post-war relevance of Christianity through modern design.



A close-up of St. Aidan’s beautiful brickwork, which includes unique “clinker bricks”

Beginning about 1955, A-frame style buildings streaked comet-like across the North American popular imagination, with vacation homes, gas stations, museums, and particularly churches, embracing the eye-catching form. For many Christians, the triangular shape was a three-dimensional representation of the Holy Trinity. Architectural historians Chad Randl and Jay M. Price suggest, however, that the more mundane driver was the high cost of postwar construction so architects and congregations wishing to create dramatic spaces on limited budgets often turned to the thrifter A-frame. Even so, by 1965, A-frames had vanished from the repertoire, and have yet to reappear. Luckily for Alta Vista, that architectural blaze of glory coincided with the neighbourhood’s rapid build-out, leaving a handful of churches in this iconic style.



The soaring sanctuary of St. Aidan’s with its glulam beams and dramatic natural lighting

St. Timothy’s Presbyterian (1959-60, built for \$300,000) represents Alta Vista’s “purest” expression of the A-frame church and is the easiest to “read.” Its triangular gable end entirely of glass fronts the street, revealing two ranks of pews facing a slightly raised chancel, with a flat-roofed one-story wing of classrooms and offices forming a sort of cloister to one side. What dramatically elevates the church are the monumental expanses of green slate tiles likely quarried in Vermont (initially expensive but with a lifespan of over 100 years!) reaching almost to the ground to spectacular effect. Continuing up Alta Vista Drive, St. Thomas the Apostle Anglican (1957) changes up the A-frame formula by truncating and flattening the peak but retains the rooflines that reach almost to the ground, broken by dormer-like window bump outs.

Continued on page 15



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OUR COMMUNITY

Continued from page 14

It is St. Aidan’s Anglican (1964-65, built for \$172,000) in the upper corner of Elmvale Acres that is St. Timothy’s true soulmate. I was only semi-surprised to discover that both structures were designed by the same architectural firm, Burgess, McLean & MacPhadyen, who cut their teeth with school buildings. Less severe and sleek in its modernity than its older sibling, St. Aidan’s trades St. Timothy’s exposed triangular metal beams for the wooden glulams (glued laminated timber) more typically associated with A-frames, and playfully breaks the strict triangle by introducing space at the roof’s peak for a long thin skylight. Yet again, St. Aidan’s is elevated by the choice of one unifying noble material, in this case, a type of rough brick mixed with clinker bricks (misshapen or burnt) for the exterior and interior walls, creating slightly wavy brick courses. These unique and quirky materials – perhaps channelling the rugged geography of Northumbria associated with St. Aidan of Lindisfarne (c.590-651) – create a wonderful textured effect, evoking the handmade traditions beloved by the late 19th century Arts and Crafts movement.

I attended a Sunday service at St. Aidan’s in January in order to see the church in use. Unexpectedly, the A-frame sanctuary is entered from the side, through a long low foyer bright with floor-to-ceiling windows. In its sanctuary, St. Aidan’s design successfully deploys a variety of strategies to overcome a universal problem with A-frames, how to get enough natural light inside. Along the 40-foot peak of the St. Aidan’s sanctuary, an unseen skylight floods light down the roof and muscular glulam ribs on one side of the sanctuary. On the other side, light enters directly from the gable end, creating a striking yin and yang effect of light intensities in either half of the sanctuary space. Low walls along the edges of the sanctuary are pierced by orange and red accent windows, evoking stained glass of old and drawing in light from all four sides. It adds up to a welcoming space for a welcoming community. Post-service, over coffee and cookies in the Church Hall, I had the chance to hear more from congregants about the sanctuary’s wonderful acoustics and the inherent “warmth” of the space.

It all raises the interesting question of why the A-frame struck a chord with mid-century North American churches. U.S. art historian Gretchen



St. Timothy’s classic A-frame style and impressive slate roof

Buggeln argues that A-frames instantly signalled modernity, a break with the past while retaining recognizably traditional references, and lower-cost construction. Church congregations, she writes, “found multiple significant resonances in the A-frame. As noted, they bore a relationship to low, medieval parish churches that connected them to historical church architecture. Second, they were informal, natural, and human scaled like a chapel in the woods. Third, because of their simple, straightforward geometry, their ability to be pared down to an essence, and the connection between form and function, they fit the modernist bill.” Original intentions and inspiration aside, the A-frame churches of Alta Vista continue to provide vibrant spaces for their congregations and visual delight to passersby.

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OUR COMMUNITY REPS

ARE YOU READY FOR THE NEXT EMERGENCY?

By Beth Gooding, Director, Public Safety Service; and
Riley Brockington, Chair, Emergency Preparedness and Protective
Services Committee, City Councillor, River Ward

The City of Ottawa actively plans for 30 different types of emergencies and disasters. Our goal is to be ready – ready to protect and preserve life, infrastructure and property.

Are you ready for the next emergency?

It’s never too late to start preparing, and the City of Ottawa’s Office of Emergency Management is here to help! There are three simple steps to follow:

- 1. **Know the risks.** Ottawa is a large city, prone to different hazards. It is important to know the risks in your area, which could include flooding and power outages, among others.
- 2. **Make a plan.** During an emergency, it can be difficult to think clearly. Having an emergency plan will help you to remain calm and focused. You may be without power for an extended period, or you may be asked to evacuate your home. Your plan should include:
 - an emergency meeting place, like a relative’s or friend’s home in a different part of the city;
 - a list of emergency contacts;
 - any additional health needs (e.g., a list of prescriptions); and
 - options for your pets.

3. **Prepare an emergency kit.** An emergency kit contains the supplies you need to sustain yourself for at least 72 hours. The following types of kits are recommended:

- A basic grab-and-go kit that should contain water (at least two litres per person per day), lighter forms of non-perishable foods (e.g., energy bars), a flashlight, a small portable charger power bank, small amounts of cash, and copies of important papers (identification).
- A shelter-in-place/evacuation kit that is basically a larger grab-and-go kit – it should contain two additional litres of water per person per day, enough non-perishable food for several days, a first aid kit, bedding, clothing, and additional portable charger power banks or a portable generator.
- A vehicle kit that can be kept in your vehicle. It should contain items such as a blanket, flashlight, first aid kit, non-perishable food and water.

Make sure to practice your plan! Please also consider people in your neighbourhood who may need your help, such as those living alone.

For more information on emergency preparedness, including checklists, visit ottawa.ca/areyouready or email AreYouReady@ottawa.ca.

The City communicates emergency information through local news media and the City News email newsletter and the City’s social media accounts. You can find the social media account links on the bottom of Ottawa.ca under “follow us,” where you will also find the link to the e-subscription. Choose “City News” to receive the email newsletter that shares the latest City updates and news, including emergency information.







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ARTS & CULTURE

What's On in Ottawa & Beyond in February?



By Tony Wohlfarth

This month, I review two films – both are available to rent in our community and the second is up for an Academy Award next month. I also preview several live musical performances playing this month.

A Haunting in Venice

Venice, Italy is the setting for this murder mystery.

Kenneth Branagh directs the film and plays the role of retired police detective Hercule Poirot. Poirot is tricked by a mystery writer (played by Tina Fey) to go to a séance in a haunted palazzo. He discovers the murder of a young girl, Alicia, along with two more murders that fateful night. Michelle Yeoh plays the role of a psychic while a young man, Jude Hill, plays the role of Leopold Ferrier.



The script is based on the classic novel, *Hallowe'en Party*, written by Agatha Christie. The film is set in 1947, with American soldiers in the background liberating Italy from the Fascists.

Venice by night can be a scary place, and Branagh captures this spirit well. The music, by Hildur Guðnadóttir, is masterful. Vaporettos are the principal way to travel, but a storm strands the party in the abandoned palazzo for the night.

A Haunting in Venice is the third novel by Agatha Christie that Branagh has turned into a film. The first two are *Murder on the Orient Express* and *Death on the Nile*. Branagh also directed Hill in his film *Belfast* in 2021.

Jude Hill won an acting award for his outstanding performance from the Las Vegas Film Critics Society.

The running time is one hour 42 minutes. The DVD version of the film is available in English, French and Spanish – with subtitles.

Killers of the Flower Moon

Martin Scorsese is one of Hollywood's most venerable directors. No surprise his latest film, a historical drama, is in consideration for an Academy Award on March 10.

Set in Oklahoma during the 1920s oil boom, the wealth of the Osage Aboriginal nation is under threat because of a series of murders of Aboriginal women. Ernest Burkhart (played by Leonardo DiCaprio) comes to town to visit his uncle, William Hale (Robert De Niro), who is seen as an elder ally by the Osage. The star of this film is Lily Gladstone, who plays the role of Mollie. Mollie travels to Washington when it becomes evident that the local authorities are not prepared to investigate the alarming deaths of Osage leaders. It is Mollie's persistence that leads to the involvement of the FBI. Tom White (played by Jesse Plemons) is dispatched to investigate.

One of the many highlights of this film is the music – composed by the late Robbie Robertson. Robertson's original musical score won an award from The Boston Society of Film Critics.

Lily Gladstone won the Golden Globe last month for her performance.

The script was written by Eric Roth and Scorsese and is based on the book of the same name by David Grann. The running time is three hours 26 minutes

How Can I See These Films?

A Haunting in Venice and *Killers of the Flower Moon* are available to rent from Movies'n Stuff, 1787 Kilborn Avenue. Call Peter at 613-738-1607 to reserve your copies.

@ NAC (1 Elgin)

One of the highlights for live music in Ottawa is on February 9, when William Prince (pictured here) returns to the NAC along with the Saskatoon-based folk duo Kacy & Clayton.



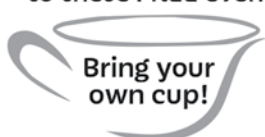
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Coffee Houses on Sustainability

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Saturday February 24
Sunday March 24
Saturday April 27
Sunday May 5

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Transportation
Zero-Waste Living

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Saturday June 8

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like heat pumps?



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an e-bike?



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pantry?



Keeping stormwater
out of your basement?



ARTS & CULTURE

Continued from page 17

Other highlights:

February 3, Montreal-based Haitian music of Waahli;

February 8, Franco-Japanese singer Maïa Barouh; and

February 18, Les Royal Pickles.

Frozen

On February 22, Disney’s *Frozen* opens on the NAC stage, with performances through until March 3. Tickets are available via Ticketmaster. You can watch a preview here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=NpB74Iwv4lk.

Erratum: An alert reader, Maureen Favretto, spotted an error in last month’s column. It indicated that Broadway Across Canada’s *The Lion King* was returning to the NAC in February – in fact, *The Lion King* is expected sometime in the fall of 2024, while *Frozen* will be onstage in February. I sincerely regret the error and hope it was not an inconvenience.

@ Great Canadian Theatre Company (1233 Wellington)


The Waltz, a play set in my home province of Saskatchewan, is on at the GCTC from February 13 to 25. Tickets at: www.gctc.ca/shows/the-waltz.

Winterlude 2024

Winterlude is on in the nation’s capital from February 2 to 19. Many activities are weather-dependent so check here for updates: www.canada.ca/en/canadianheritage/campaigns/winterlude/calendar-events.html



Tony Wohlfarth is an Ottawa-based freelance film and entertainment writer. He is to be a guest of the NAC for this month’s performance by William Prince and screened Killers of the Flower Moon courtesy of the ByTowne.



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OUR ENVIRONMENT

FRIENDS OF PLEASANT PARK WOODS

By the Alta Vista Community Association Greenspace Stewardship Committee

‘Erratic or Not?’

While enjoying your walk in Pleasant Park Woods, it’s hard not to notice some large boulders that pop up around the forest. Have you ever wondered how they ended up in our woods? It has been suggested that these boulders are “glacial erratics.” Glacial erratics are defined as rocks that have been transported by ice and deposited far from where they originated. In order for a boulder to be classified as an erratic, its composition must be different from that of the surrounding bedrock.

According to the Geological Survey of Canada, the bedrock of Pleasant Park Woods is classified as part of the Carlsbad Formation, which is mostly composed of grey limestone. The age of the Carlsbad Formation is about 450 million years.

A local geologist examined some of the boulders in Pleasant Park Woods and found some composed of granite gneiss and some composed of limestone. The ones with granite gneiss would be approximately 2.5 billion years old and probably were pushed or carried by ice to their present location.

The fact that some of the boulders have the same geology as the bedrock suggests that not all the boulders in our woods are erratics. Do you know that the word “erratic” is derived from the Latin word “errare,” which means to wander. As you “wander” in Pleasant Park Woods, please enjoy your walk!



Some of the boulders in Pleasant Park Woods are "erratics."



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OUR ENVIRONMENT

BIRDS OF ALTA VISTA: THE DARK-EYED JUNCO

By Dr. Richard Knapton

Winter has set in, and now it seems most songbirds that are encountered on a winter's walk in wooded areas are mainly around bird feeders. One species which frequently visits feeders is the Dark-eyed Junco.



Dark-eyed Junco: photo by Bob Baker

Dark-eyed Juncos are neat, flashy little sparrows that flit about forest floors across Canada in summer, then in winter occur wherever there are brushy wooded areas. In our area, they are easily recognized by their crisp dark grey and white plumage and their bright white tail feathers they habitually flash in flight. Dark-eyed Juncos are among the most abundant forest birds in North America. They regularly come to feeders, often foraging on the ground on spilled seed below them.

The word “junco” is a curious and counter-intuitive name for this bird. It is placed in the genus *Junco*, introduced in 1831 by the German naturalist Johann Georg Wagler. This genus name is the Spanish word for the plants known as rushes, from the Latin word *Juncus*. However, these birds are seldom if ever found among rushes, which grow in wet ground, while they much prefer dry soil. Its modern scientific name, *Junco hyemalis*, means winter junco from the Latin word *hyemalis* – “of the winter.” After decades of research, *Junco* systematics are still confusing, with various authors accepting between three and twelve species. It is called Dark-eyed, as there is a species of juncos that have yellow eyes. In our area, the subspecies of Dark-eyed Juncos is the Slate-coloured Junco, although we occasionally are visited by “Oregon” Dark-eyed Juncos. These juncos have rich brown backs, unlike our Slate-coloured subspecies, which have dark grey backs.

In our area, juncos mostly appear as winter sets in, and then retreat northward each spring. They breed in forests across much of North America and at elevations ranging from sea level to more than 4,000 metres. They are found most often in coniferous forests such as pine, spruce and fir, but sometimes in deciduous forests such as aspen, oak, maple and hickory. During winter and on migration, they use a wide variety of habitats including open woodlands, fields, roadsides, parks and gardens.

Dark-eyed Juncos are primarily seed-eaters, with seeds of chickweed, buckwheat, lamb's quarters, sorrel, and the like making up about 75 per cent of their year-round diet. At feeders, they seem to prefer millet over sunflower seeds. During the breeding season, they eat insects including beetles, moths, butterflies, caterpillars, ants, wasps and flies.



Dark-eyed Junco: photo by Bob Baker

The female chooses the nest site, typically in a depression on sloping ground, rock face, or amid the tangled roots of an upturned tree. Occasionally, juncos nest above the ground on horizontal branches (rarely as high as 15 m), window ledges, and in hanging flower pots or light fixtures.

The female builds the nest, using her beak to weave together materials and her body to give the nest its shape. Nests can be quite variable depending on where they are built. Sometimes ground nests get just a fine lining of grasses or pine needles. Other nests may be built on a foundation of twigs, leaves and moss, then lined with grasses, ferns, rootlets, hair, and fine pieces of moss. The nest usually takes three to seven days to build, and when finished it is 15 cm across, with a depth of 6 cm. It is rare for a junco to reuse a nest. Clutch size ranges from three to six eggs, with an incubation period of 12 to 13 days, and a nestling period of 10 to 13 days.

When foraging, Dark-eyed Juncos typically hop (rather than walk) on the ground, pecking or scratching at the leaf litter, or flit very low in underbrush gleaning food from twigs and leaves. They sometimes fly up from the ground to catch insects from tree trunks. In flight, they flap continuously and pump their tails so the white outer tail feathers flash; flight is very agile as the bird manoeuvres through its tangled environs. Male juncos are territorial in summer, chasing off intruders in rapid flights accompanied by excited call notes. When males court females, they fan or flick open their wings and tail, hop up and down, and pick up pieces of nest material or moss; females seem to prefer males that show more white in the tail. During winter, Dark-eyed Juncos can form fairly large flocks and also forage with other sparrows. Junco flocks typically have a hierarchy or pecking order, and earlier arrivals in spring tend to rank higher in the group than later ones.

Dark-eyed Juncos are still numerous and widespread, although the North American Breeding Bird Survey reports that populations have declined by about 0.7 per cent per year between 1966 and 2019, resulting in a cumulative decline of 31 per cent. Partners in Flight estimates a global breeding population of 220 million and rates the species as of low conservation concern. The oldest recorded Dark-eyed Junco was at least 11 years four months old when it was recaptured and re-released during banding operations in West Virginia in 2001. It had been banded in the same state in 1991.

OUR ENVIRONMENT

PHOTOS BY ELLWOOD'S
GARY HOWARD

What is the difference between the American Crow and the Common Raven? Size and beak area are dead giveaways. The Common Raven has a wingspan of about four feet ((1.3 metres) while the American Crow's wingspan reaches no more than three feet (one metre). The beak of the raven is much thicker and larger than that of the crow. Further, an American Crow's call is much higher in pitch than the Common Raven's, and Common Ravens love to soar in updrafts. Both Common Ravens and American Crows are the smartest birds in Canada and live here year-round. All those large black birds you see in the morning and the evening are American Crows flying to or from their common roosting site near the Ottawa General Hospital.



Common Raven

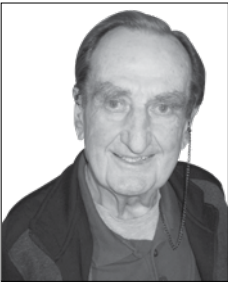


A leucistic (partial loss of pigmentation in animals) American Crow

OUR PEOPLE

SHE FOLLOWS A TALL ORDER
WRITING NOVELS, AT HOME

By Courtney Tower



Stay-at-home mom? That was the usual, or at least the often, years ago. Then later, commonly, mom became one of a two-earner marriage, often juggling with job and managing a home active with kids in their schools and many activities. Now, a twist in the story for one mom, Rhiannon Beaubien, once a daily downtown worker with husband and two sons to boot. She is back to staying at home, with husband Sylvain, packing sons Mylo, 13, and Zane, 8, off to Alta Vista Public School in the mornings and going to get them these frigid afternoons. No downtown job. In fact, no regular job. But plenty of work, self-discipline, rigour. That's because she writes novels, in her home-office in the basement. She presently is two-thirds of the way through her third one, a spy thriller set in another time and place, Cold War Berlin.

Rhiannon (the name is Welsh and in English would mean great queen or goddess)*, laughs easily and often, evidently genuinely, as she recounts her passage from six-year-old manuscript author supported by mom and dad Angela Wilton and Roland Beaubien in Pickering, Ontario, to 18 years with Sylvain and 13 in their home in Alta Vista.

Against Classic Spy Thrillers
"The Wrong Kind of Spy"

One might have thought that all the stuffing has been drawn from Cold War spy novels set in Berlin: who any longer sets out to emulate John le Carré and the 30 million-plus copies of his secret agent George Smiley tales — apart, that is, from Le Carré's son Nick Harkaway who takes it up in a book to come out later this year? Well, perhaps no one quite else, because Rhiannon Beaubien says her novels about Cold War spying and Berlin are unlike Le Carré's and all the others, unlike and more real. Spying never was conducted in quite the classic way made famous by Le Carré or, before him, Ian Fleming with his James Bond series, she claims. Her two novels thus far, both very hefty tomes (the first, Alone Among Spies, 443 pages; the second, The Wrong Kind of Spy, 420 pages) have a Canadian heroine (Jillian). They depict characters from the RCMP and the United States' CIA, play up the slogging work of intercepting, analyzing, following up on signals sent electronically by many countries and actors.

Rhiannon can write from special knowledge about much of this because of her 10 years as an analyst/writer with the CSE (Communications Security Establishment), which exists to intercept, study, sift through, describe inferences from or possible actions that could result from, e-mails, satellites and other electronic messaging from a host of sources in the world. After a decade of that (2006-2016), although it was work she loved, she says, she grew tired of what effectively was same-old-same-old, in that the signals and issues were ever-changing but Canada's way of dealing with them was not keeping up.

Continued on page 21

"Love is the greatest refreshment in life." —
Pablo Picasso

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OUR PEOPLE

Continued from page 20

“What we had, the legislation we have still, was designed for the telephone era and we are in the internet era,” she says. “Canada has sophisticated ways of intercepting the signals but not in dealing with them.”

One example: CSE intercepts signals, foreign signals. It may not, by law, deal with Canadian signals or Canadian-based issues that come before it. That is for the CSIS (Canadian Security Intelligence Service) and not for CSE. Yet the way the internet works, getting data to destination the fastest and most efficient ways possible, means that a text sent electronically actually is broken up into literally hundreds and even thousands of bits or pieces with each piece travelling a computer-chosen fastest and most secure way to destination.

“So, let’s say a message is going from Mexico to Morocco,” Rhiannon says. “Some bits of it may go from Mexico through Canada, some through U.S. routes, some through, say Russia or Iran or Brazil. So then is this a Canadian message, for CSE not to touch, or it is a foreign-based message, which CSE can and should touch? There are such conundrums and arguments among policymakers all the time, and they hamper CSE’s work. That is just one instance of how outmoded CSE’s legislation is and how it needs to be revised.”

Rhiannon, a 1979 child, came to the CSE from an elementary school education in Toronto, then a double major at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario, in philosophy and drama, where she says she learned “to think through situations, to construct arguments and scenarios, to connect pathways in and out of situations, to exert discipline on whatever you are imagining.” There was more of that kind of learning in doing a master’s degree at Leeds University in the United Kingdom, in international communications. She joined the CSE in 2006, just after pairing off with Sylvain who today is a program manager at the National Research Council.

From The CSE To How-To Books A Pathway To Novel Writing

After her decade at the CSE, she and a colleague named Shane Parrish left to pursue book-writing for the company Parrish had formed out of his popular blog about following precepts and practices taken from past writers and examples to improve one’s performances in business and in life generally. She became managing editor of his little firm and was chief writer and full organizer of preparation, production, marketing and distribution of three books in that genre, sort of how-to books as taken “from philosophers, scientists, positive thinkers, environmentalists, and many other reputable sources.” The books became wildly popular, she says, selling more than 400,000 copies in the United States and India, foremost, and many other countries.

“The U.S. and India are English-speaking countries with an ethic of people always trying to gain advantage, to do better, and the books — 1. On general thinking concepts; 2. on physics, chemistry, biology fundamentals; 3. on systems and mathematics — presented themselves in that vein,” she says. “I think these books are still relevant and I hope people read them for a long time.

“When I was writing and managing the books with Shane Parrish, I must have been the Ottawa Public Library’s best customer for years,” she recalls. “I borrowed and read ten times the number of books that we bought.”

A year ago, she left that pursuit to concentrate on her novel-writing and to pick up short-term writing contracts such as a current one with a not-for-profit agency dealing with women’s concerns.

“It is all a ways from my first love, which is writing for the stage, writing plays, but I also love what I am doing now,” she says. “And I think our boys are glad to see me at home.”

*“Rhiannon” was the classic hit signature song written and sung by Stevie Nicks of the rock band Fleetwood Mac in 1975. From an ancient Welsh tale, Nicks wrote of what she later said was “a very mystical woman that refused to be tied down in any way.” Some accounts on the internet today say that the song was “constantly voted as one of the top all-time 500.”



First novel out of her basement, held by Rhiannon Beaubien. Photo Credit: Gerri Doherty.

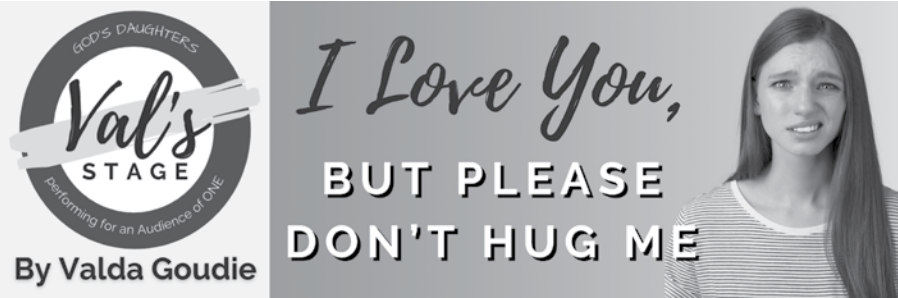
*"Love looks not with the eyes,
but with the mind. And
therefore is winged
Cupid painted blind."
— William Shakespeare*



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FAITH NEWS



Entering the kindergarten yard in the mornings can be a dangerous venture. Some children will barrel toward you like puppies to greet you in energetic puppy fashion. While they might not jump on you, they will crash into your body with their arms wide for an exuberant hug. If you don't see them coming, their hockey check expression of affection might cause some instability as you recover from the unexpected contact. Even more alarming are the hugs that come from behind you, when a child wraps their arms around one of your legs...

But aren't hugs great? The warmth of another person's body snuggling against yours, their arms holding you in place with their tight embrace. It can make you feel safe and loved to receive such a physical gift from someone who loves you.

When I was young, hugs were reserved for family members. A kiss and a hug were part of the 10-step plan for bedtime each night. If grandparents or aunts and uncles were visiting at the time, they could be included in the hug ritual. These affectionate squeezes sent us to bed feeling loved and accepted by our family members.

Some families broaden their hug sphere to include friends and, in my case, teachers. When our teenage boys hit their early twenties, we witnessed how they greeted and said goodbye to their friends with a hug. My husband and I continue to try and "embrace" this hug culture since neither of us grew up in it.

In my second year of teaching, there were two siblings in my K-1 class who had been removed from their family home and lived in foster care. They were a nightmare as students. They were loud and disruptive and did not get along well with others.


The two frustrated student assistants tried a strategy that might not be accepted in many schools today. They conspired to pour LOVE into these two little ones. It was the one thing they were missing. While their mom loved them, she lived a dysfunctional lifestyle and lost custody of her children as a result. The foster parents were merely hosting them, not demonstrating affection the way the young ones needed it.

"We are going to love them so hard!" one student assistant stated. "We will hug and squeeze them and praise them for every positive word and action."

And they did. Unbelievably, the children began to flourish! They stopped attention-seeking behaviours and began to accept their classmates as people who wanted to be their friends. The transformation was incredible. They just needed love.

While everybody needs love, everyone does not have the same tolerance for hugs. We had three sons, and one of them was not a snuggly hugger. He stiffened his back as he awkwardly reached around the other person, extracting himself from the touch as quickly as possible without causing offence.

Continued on page 23



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FAITH NEWS

Continued from page 22

Even in our kindergarten class, some children are not fond of hugs, especially when they come without warning. In fact, I received an email from a parent after one of my students expressed to her mom that she really didn't like it when her friends hugged her without her permission. This is why we often remind our young students to ask their friends if they want a hug before doing it.

One body language cue to look for is when someone steps back when you get in their personal space – that person is likely not a hugger. Do not enter their goalie crease (allow me to keep the hockey metaphor going). In some cases, you might be risking a penalty! Like swatting at a pesky fly that invades our space, a swat of frustration in kindergarten is common!

The good news for people who feel this way is that we can love and be loved without physical touching. Love can be shown through words and actions. However, when we only look to other humans to love us, sometimes love lets us down; people can break our hearts, especially when love comes with conditions. (If you do this, I'll love you. If you don't, I'll find someone else who will.)

Thankfully, there is a greater love than this. Someone loves us unconditionally with perfect love. 1 John 4:19 says, "We love because he first loved us." Who is HE? God. God loves us, His creation. He loves each one of us, whether good or bad, rich or poor, regardless of race, sexual orientation, or gender assignment. God loves us and desires to have a personal relationship with each of us.

The Bible is God's Word, and those 66 books tell many stories that all contribute to the story of a loving God who hates sin but loves people. He loves us so much, in fact, that He sent His only son to the earth in human form so that He would live as an example for us and then die for us as an offering for our sins (John 3:16). When we receive this gift of salvation and invite Jesus to become our saviour and role model, God adopts us into His family and promises us a rich inheritance which includes living forever with Him in a perfect world.

Furthermore, because He loves us individually, not just as a whole group, He knows our love languages and whether we like to be hugged. The comfort we feel in His love is tailored to you and me.

In this Valentine's Day season, whether you are in a loving relationship or not, remember you are still loved. God loves you more than any man, woman, or animal ever will – even those adorable puppies! And I guarantee that God's comforting hugs will not offend anyone.

Valda Goudie is a teacher and author of the ***Tickle Me with a Crowbar!*** series (available on Amazon and Kobo.com). Visit valsstage.com and download Book 1 for free.



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JUST GOOD ADVICE

THE GARDEN GATE

By Patricia Mosher



Feature: Ten plants to grow for colourful branches and indoor arrangements

A beautiful spring or summer garden is common, but creating one that stands out in winter requires some research and planning. Since garden centres often display immediate showstoppers, shrubs that look interesting in the dead of winter are often overlooked. Yet, incorporating a few of these into your landscape will look wonderful when the rest of the garden is hidden beneath the snow. Additionally, many of these shrubs also provide the opportunity to create stunning vase arrangements inside your home.

- 1. **Red Winterberry Holly:** Known for its bright red berries that persist through winter, this shrub also adds a pop of colour to indoor winter arrangements. These vibrant berries contrast beautifully against the foliage, making it a popular choice for winter décor.
- 2. **Gold Winterberry Holly:** Like the Red Winterberry Holly but with golden-yellow berries, this variety provides a unique twist to the winter landscape. The warm, golden hues offer a warm visual appeal, perfect for adding diversity to indoor displays as well.
- 3. **Blue Holly:** With glossy, deep green foliage and distinctive blue-black berries, the Blue Holly brings a sophisticated touch to winter vistas. The spiky leaves and colourful berries also add texture and depth to indoor displays.
- 4. **Boxwood:** Loved for its dense evergreen foliage, Boxwood is an easy-to-grow, versatile shrub that also provides a classic element to indoor winter arrangements. The small, dark-green leaves offer a neutral backdrop that complements other more colourful stems and branches.
- 5. **Red Dogwood:** This shrub is valued for its vibrant red stems which stand out dramatically in the winter landscape. When used for indoor arrangements, these stems create striking visual interest and contrast.



Red Dogwood; photo credit Etsy.com

- 6. **Yellow Dogwood:** Like the Red Dogwood but with yellow stems, the sunny hue of this dogwood variety adds a touch of warmth and liveliness to indoor displays weeks before the Forsythia shrubs even think about blooming.
- 7. **Pussy Willows:** Their soft, velvety catkins provide a tactile quality that is hard to beat. To force pussy willows into bloom indoors, wait until you see a slight swelling of the buds (usually by late-February), then use a clean pair of pruning shears to cut the bottom of the stems at a sharp angle and bring them inside and place in a vase or container filled with lukewarm water.
- 8. **Red Chokeberry:** Featuring clusters of red berries that last well into winter, Red Chokeberry branches provide a splash of colour and interest in indoor displays as well.
- 9. **Miscanthus:** Also known as Japanese Silver Grass, this ornamental perennial grass is a garden favourite. Plumes of silver feathers appear in the fall, providing winter interest and an opportunity to use for indoor arrangements.
- 10. **Hydrangea:** One of my ultimate favourite plants for so many reasons, including the fact that its dried flower heads persist into winter and are perfect for incorporating into indoor “floral” arrangements.

Plant of the month: Paper Birch

Among the leaf-shedding shade trees of Ottawa, there is just one superstar in my view – the birch tree with its peeling snow-white bark. Against a clear blue winter sky, they embody the crisp, cold intensity of the season, while at night they glow like a company of ghosts.



Indoor “floral” arrangement with hydrangea; photo credit: iNaturalist.com.



Paper birch tree; photo credit: iNaturalist.com.

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JUST GOOD ADVICE

Continued from page 24

In the history of our continent, perhaps no tree has played a more colourful role. Indigenous peoples (and later French fur traders) stripped the waterproof bark of paper birches, sewed it into sheets using thread made from the roots of tamarack or black spruce trees, then stretched it, and lashed it over canoe frames hewn from Eastern White Cedar. A tea was often made from the young leaves and twigs, and used to treat acne and rashes. Birch trunks can be tapped for syrup, but not in an amount or quality to rival sugar maples. Numerous birds feed on the seeds of the delicate catkins.

The paper birch tree (*Betula papyrifera*) is a fast-growing but somewhat short-lived tree (35–60 years at most) that often develops multiple trunks as it matures. The most distinctive characteristic of this deciduous tree is the peeling bark, which complements winter’s snowy surroundings.

One of the most widely distributed of North American trees, paper birch trees are found from Newfoundland and Labrador and west to British Columbia. They are renowned for their affinity to water and thrive in naturally moist areas. To optimize growth and water retention in an urban landscape, apply a thick layer of mulch beneath the tree’s canopy to maintain soil moisture and coolness.

In fall, the foliage turns a blazing shade of yellow so growing paper birch trees means you will always have something interesting to look at in the landscape.

Gardening in the month of February

Even though our gardens are covered in snow these days, there is still so much you can do to enjoy gardening this time of year.

- Bring the garden indoors: Growing bulbs such as paperwhites or Amaryllis indoors is a wonderful way to get your gardening fix this time of the year.
- Cut a few stems from dormant shrubs such as those enumerated above to create an indoor twig arrangement.
- Learn something new: Sign up for an online gardening class or workshop.
- Plant a terrarium by designing a garden under glass. Use clear-glass containers that have a lid or stopper that will help maintain a humid atmosphere around your plants. For plants such as succulents that prefer a drier climate, select a large, open-mouthed container. Purchase small plants at a local big box store that remain compact.
- Feed the birds: By late winter, many natural food sources for local birds will begin to thin out so stock your bird feeders until spring (black oil sunflowers for cardinals, Blue Jays and juncos; suet for woodpeckers and nuthatches; and Nyjer seed for finches).
- Check out some of the online seed companies and place your order for best selection.
- Ensure you have a supply of potting mix and seedling containers on hand if you plan to start seeds inside later this spring.

The Garden Gate is a monthly feature about all things gardening. Opinions are the author’s own. If you have ideas for upcoming articles or want to share your thoughts about this month’s article, please contact Patricia Mosher by email: OttawaPlantByNumbers@gmail.com or on Instagram: [@ottawaplantbynumbers](https://www.instagram.com/ottawaplantbynumbers). Patricia has lived in and been an avid gardener in Alta Vista for over 30 years.

THE OPTIMIZED SELF

By Lucy Agba



The optimized self is the improved self, the progressive, evolving self. You are required to better yourself regularly. This process can be stretching and demanding, but it is necessary for a better self. Being better should be the aspiration of everyone. Self-improvement is a simple way to evaluate growth and development.

How should you optimize yourself? Although self-optimization can be demanding and slow, its reward is lifelong. When you pay attention to these simple processes you get to appreciate yourself more and be proud of the journey you have undertaken. Pick what resonates with you. Be patient with your progress and celebrate your wins, however small. Let’s get started.

- Practice self-kindness – you get better as you become kinder to yourself. This is not a “don’t be bothered” attitude, rather it is being able to accept your current reality and taking steps to change those realities where needed. A better way to practice kindness is to find something good in your reality to be happy about.
- Gratitude – you may have heard about the need to practice gratitude. Honestly, this cannot be overemphasized. Gratitude is the water to the garden of life and the fuel of your change. Be grateful for everything, literally everything. If you think about it, be grateful for it. Even the not too good events, be grateful for them. Gratitude will help open your eyes to find what the takeaways are.
- Practice forgiveness – forgiving is the oil that keeps life’s frictions off. To function optimally, you must forgive daily. Practice self-forgiveness and forgiveness to others. Truth is you can only forgive others as much as you forgive yourself. Note also that it is easier to excuse others but hold yourself to ransom. To live a better, optimized life you must constantly live in the consciousness of forgiveness.

Continued on page 26



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JUST GOOD ADVICE

Continued from page 25

- Self-love – is akin to self-forgiveness but a bit different. Of course, you can better forgive when you love. However, self-love speaks to treating yourself with the respect you deserve. Question is do you believe you deserve respect? Attend to yourself, and your affairs with a high level of respect. My personal example of self-love was my decision not to over pack my day with activities. Before now, I used to be stressed and tired because I stocked my days with lots of activities, which left me stressed, tired and irritated. My decision to plan my day with only so much, creating room for rest helped me become more effective, energized and happy. I now treat myself with respect and value. That is self-love.
- Take responsibility – the optimized person takes responsibility for their actions and inactions. This opens true evaluation, as well as opportunities to learn, grow and be supported. People are kinder and willing to support a person who accepts responsibility and works at improving things. This may not be the easiest path, but it is a noble and great self-improvement strategy.

- Less social media – what? Lucy! But yes! Do you wish to optimize yourself? Spend less time on social media. It is the number one time waster for a majority of people. Replace social media time with meditation, reading, real connection, learning a skill, spending time in nature, “you time” for self-discovery, and sport.

Self-optimization, although demanding, is very rewarding. Like anything else, when you start, it gets better and easier. You only need to start to see how these simple steps can make you better. There are a lot of things you can do to better oneself. I hope these ones may resonate with you.

However, should you have other things to add, please share to enrich our collective expression as we journey to optimizing ourselves. Remember, self-optimization can be in every area of life, health, image, mind, finance, spiritual and relationships.

NOW is a great time to start.

Alta Vista resident Lucy Agba is a Development Communicator with over 10 years of experience in Behaviour Change Communication, and a life coach. She holds a Master’s in Mass Communication. Her interest is in self-development and people management.



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JUST GOOD ADVICE

I TRANSFERRED MY HOME TO MY SON
FOR A DOLLAR

By Dylan McGuinty Jr., JD



“I am shaken up. I am a widowed mother of three adult children. I transferred my home to my son for a dollar three years ago because he told me it would save estate tax. We agreed verbally at the time that he would move in and take care of me and distribute the home equally among him and his siblings upon my death. Since then, my son sold the home and purchased a new one, his girlfriend has moved in, and we are all now living in the new home; my son bought a \$150,000 truck, and he and his girlfriend are currently vacationing in the Bahamas. My home environment is now toxic, and my son has threatened to place me in a senior’s residence. My home was the main asset of my estate. I also have two other children, who I fear have effectively been disinherited. Please help!”

The scenario above highlights the importance of proper estate planning and a few legal issues. First, the use of a trust, such as an Alter Ego Trust, would have: achieved the objective of lawfully avoiding the Estate Administration Tax, while helping to ensure the use of the home for the mother’s benefit; avoided the moving in of the girlfriend without terms the mother agreed to in advance; and helped ensure an equal distribution of the home’s sale proceeds among all three children upon death. Second, if the mother consented to having the girlfriend moved in, a cohabitation agreement should have been set up between the son, the mother and the girlfriend to guard against the negative impacts on the mother of any of the girlfriend’s Family Law rights. Third, a wider discussion with all three children setting out expectations, shared and separate responsibilities and accountability would have been beneficial. Fourth, an action for breach of trust should be brought in court. The claim would argue that the home and its sale proceeds, and any assets to which the proceeds can be “traced,” are held in trust by the son as a trustee for the mother’s benefit, and that the personal use of those funds constitutes a breach of trust. Finally, a properly planned and prepared Power of Attorney for Property and Power of Attorney for Personal Care should be executed.

Financial abuse of seniors is an unfortunate reality. Having a good lawyer is excellent protection.

Dylan McGuinty Jr. is a lawyer with the McGuinty Law Office on Rockingham Ave. in Ottawa. He practices in the areas of Wills and Estate Planning, Estate Administration, Trust Law, and assisting Executors and Substitute Decision-Makers.



BOOKWORMS DELIGHT

THE MAGIC CROWN (2023)

Story by Maya Regel; Art by Bridget Lu (Lu Xiao Cha)

By Yasmine Leger

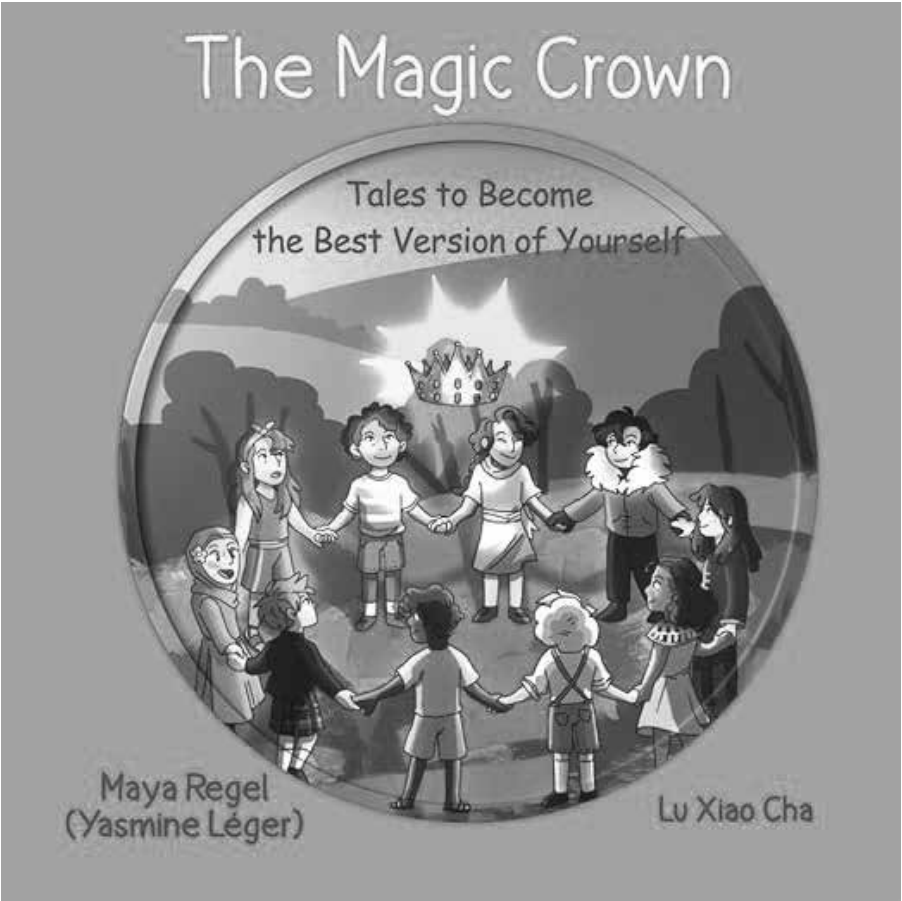
My name is Yasmine Leger, and I immigrated to Canada from Haiti in 2005. I’ve lived in the Alta Vista neighbourhood for 18 years. I love the area because it’s peaceful, surrounded by nature, and easy to get around.

When I moved to Canada, I went back to school. I enrolled in a writing and translation program at l’Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO) and fell in love with writing. I started writing a few romance stories until I took a course in children’s literature at the University of Ottawa. Since 2012, I have been writing and self-publishing children’s books on Amazon. I currently have 20 children’s stories published in both English and French.

My most recent book, *The Magic Crown: Tales to Become the Best Version of Yourself*, was published in December 2023, under the pseudonym Maya Regel. In this book, I combined my passion for writing with my newfound interests in spirituality, chakras, and semi-precious stones and crystals. This book contains 10 short stories about many qualities such as learning to be authentic, confident, kind and grateful. Each story represents a child from different parts of the world struggling with certain qualities. When they discover the magic crown, they learn to overcome their doubts and realize they are amazing beings filled with wonderful qualities. Once they believe in themselves, they can achieve anything they want.

In short, my book is full of feel-good stories that parents can read with their children at bedtime.

Available on Amazon at: www.amazon.ca/Maya-Regel/e/B00J0ZCRCU/ref=aufs_dp_fta_dsk



BOOKWORMS DELIGHT

KUKUM (2019)

By Michel Jean

Translated by Susan Ouriou (2023)

Reviewed by Marie-Andrée Lajoie

Kukum (which means grandmother in the Innu language) was published in 2019 and won the France-Québec Prize in 2020, launching the international career of its author. The book was published in English in July 2023. Michel Jean is a Québec journalist and broadcaster. He is Innu and his family hails from Mashteuiatsh, a reserve on the shore of Lac St-Jean, in the Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean region of Québec. He was known as a journalist before he started his writing career and truly revealed his heritage. This story touches me particularly as I come from Chicoutimi, a city in the Saguenay region.

The story is based on the life of Jean’s great-grandmother, Almanda, a white woman who married at 15 into an Innu family at the turn of the 20th century. Her life was spent between Mashteuiatsh (then called Pointe-Bleue) and the land surrounding the Péribonka River, north of Lac St-Jean. She was born in 1880 and died in 1977 at age 97.

The Innu were nomads, hunters and fishermen, living off the land. They hunted in the winter, living in tents in the most challenging conditions, and selling their furs to the Hudson’s Bay company in the summer. They were getting to their hunting territories by canoe, also travelling by foot or dog sleds. They were raising their children in the woods. Families were dispersed on the land but helped one another when necessary. It was a peaceful and hard life but also joyful.

Almanda learned the Innu language and the numerous skills required of an Innu woman. She had eight children, all born in the woods. The love of her husband, Thomas, and the support and caring of her sisters- and father-in-law sustained her. She became a great hunter, could prepare hides for sale, and could carry heavy loads through the woods. She also brought books for the long winter nights and taught her children to read.

The second part of the book documents how Innu life changed when they were forced into sedentary life. Logging started in the North and log drives took over rivers. Travelling by canoe was over. Living on the reserve became the way of life; children were taken away to residential schools; houses were built. “Progress” was arriving at Pointe-Bleue, together with drinking, violence and despair. Almanda continued to be a leader and advocate for her community through her later years. She was part of the last generation that had known the true Innu life.

Through the extraordinary story of his great-grandmother, Michel Jean teaches us so much about the Innu. It is astonishing to me that we knew nothing of this life happening so close to my hometown. Jean is particularly skilled at illustrating the harsh reality of the Innu nomadic culture. I highly recommend this book to you.

I also recently read Michel Jean’s latest book, *Qimmick*, which tells the story of a young Inuit couple of Nunavik and their sled dogs. This one is a crime story that also reveals a painful chapter in the history of Indigenous people in Canada.

On my night table: *All the Beauty in the World* (Patrick Brinkley); *Happy-go-Lucky* (David Sedaris); *Cutting for Stone* (Abraham Verghese)



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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

COMPUTER TIPS AND TRICKS

By Malcolm and John Harding, of Compu-Home

More Fun and More Useful

For most of us (well... the adults anyway) our computer is a tool. A thought for another day would be how incredibly useful that tool is in 2024, compared to not so long ago. But here we would like to focus on easy ways to make your computer even more useful, and maybe a bit more fun as well.

Starting with fun, some clients have asked us lately about using their own photos for computer desktop wallpaper or slide shows. We are delighted to explain to them that this is VERY easy on Windows, Macintosh, smartphones and tablets. You can choose a single photo to be the background as an alternative to the one that comes with your operating system, or even a whole folder of photos to make a slideshow, with a new memory appearing every minute or two. After a month or so you can switch to a different photos folder and enjoy the reminders of a different vacation or event. The instructions for how to set up a slideshow are a bit different depending on your operating system, but you will be surprised at how easy it is when you Google the steps or watch a YouTube Video to learn to do it on your device.

Moving on to making your music more accessible. There are a couple of learning curves here, but they are well worth it. First, store your music on your computer so that you don't have to be fumbling with CDs, flash drives, YouTube, or other sources. Make a music folder or sets of folders arranged logically. Second, take the time to learn how to make playlists in your favourite music player app. This is easier said than done; the player apps are notorious for not being easy to master. In the end, you will be able to enjoy your music in the background while you are working on something else, or even just set aside some time to turn up the speakers or slip in the earbuds.

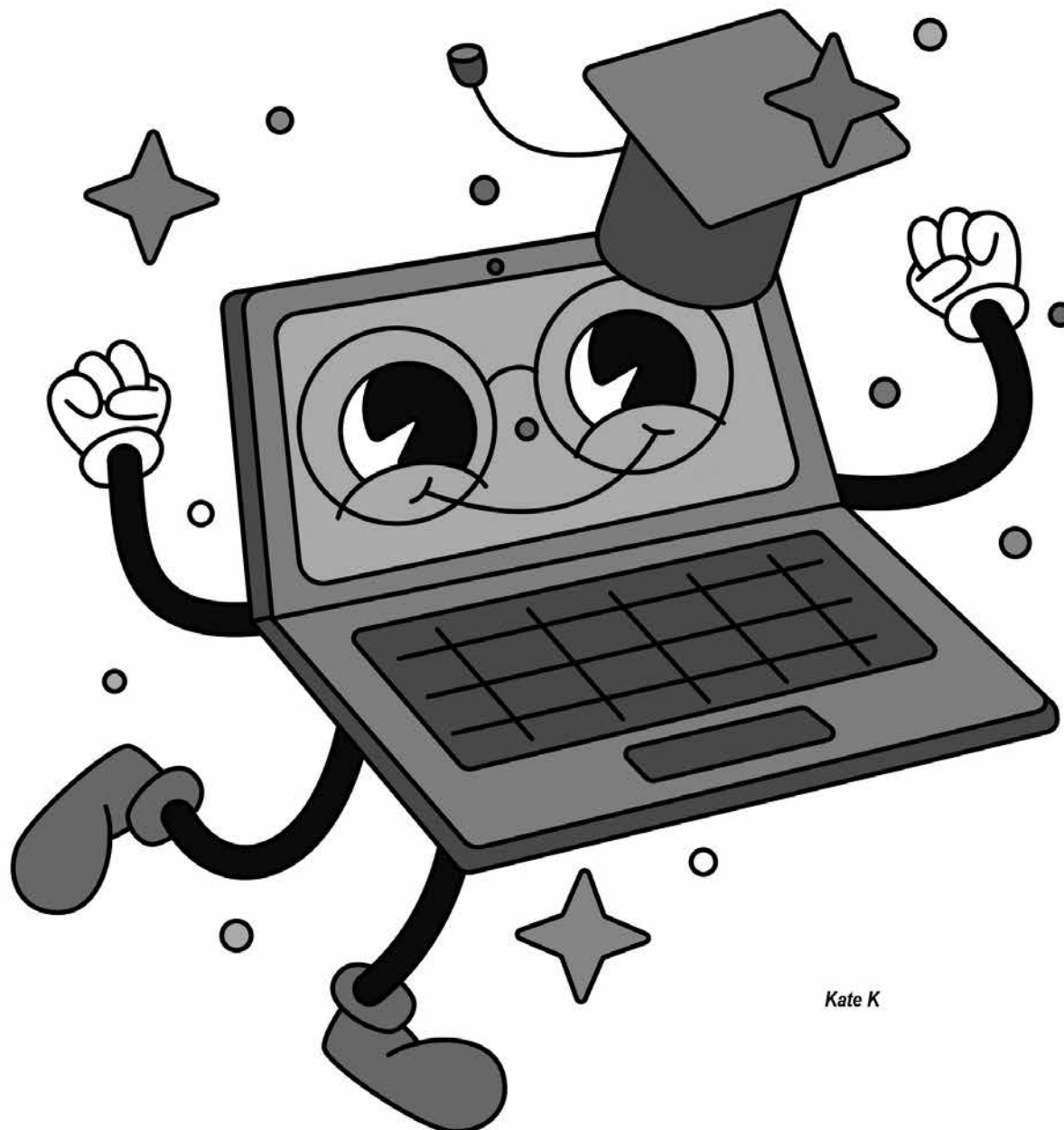
Often when we are helping our clients, we are disappointed to see that they are not taking advantage of tabs when they are using the Internet. All the popular browsers allow you to keep open your current web page when you want to see a new one. You simply click to the right of the name of your current page in the top line of the browser (usually designated with a +) and a new page opens, allowing you to search for something new. This is very handy for research, because you can then jump back and forth among two or more pages.

*GCFG*Global – Browsing in Chrome is an excellent resource with a section on how to use tabs and lots more information on efficient use of your browser. It focuses on Chrome, but considering that browsers are so similar now, you will be able to use these tips whichever one you use.

A second monitor is a relatively inexpensive add-on to a desktop or laptop computer that can save a lot of flipping among apps or pages. It can be an especially useful arrangement when, for example, you are consulting information on one side while writing notes on the subject in a word processor on the other screen. You can even copy-and-paste when necessary and change pages on either side. A good quality refurbished monitor will cost less than \$100 or you can usually find a brand new model with high resolution and a decent size for \$150 or less (a spin-off benefit here is that if one of your monitors breaks down you will be able to carry on until you repair or replace it.).

More fun, and more efficient – we bet you feel better already!

We love feedback! Contact Compu-Home at 613-731-5954 to discuss this column, share your opinions and suggest future columns. Our email address is info@compu-home.com and our website, with our blog, is www.compu-home.com.



Kate K



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HEALTH & FITNESS

CONSIDER BIPOLAR DEPRESSION WHEN ANTIDEPRESSANTS ARE NOT WORKING

By Dr. Sarah Chan, Psychiatrist



One of the most common presentations of a patient to a family doctor or psychiatrist is for symptoms of depression. These symptoms include feeling low in mood, but also having sleep and appetite changes, low energy, poor concentration and a lack of interest in things that would normally bring joy, like hobbies and seeing friends. When depression becomes severe, a person can become catatonic or psychotic, meaning they can stop eating, talking or moving and can even begin to believe things they normally do not. Fortunately, these severe mental states are rare.

The most commonly used medications for the treatment of depression are the antidepressants called selective serotonergic reuptake inhibitors or SSRIs. These include drugs like fluoxetine (Prozac), escitalopram (Cipralext), and sertraline (Zoloft). As well, there are other types of antidepressants with different modes of action from the SSRIs, and often patients will respond to one of these.

There are instances where despite many trials with different antidepressants, a patient's depression does not respond. I will not go into all of the reasons why this might be, but wanted to highlight one possibility in particular: bipolar illness.

A bipolar depression means that depression is not the only mood irregularity in this person's mental illness, but this person is also prone to more energetic, elevated or irritable moods as well. These episodes are called manic or hypomanic episodes and are diagnosed depending on the duration of the episode as well as a set of clinical symptoms. In these cases, antidepressants should be avoided because they can push patients into elevated mood states and cause disinhibited, reckless behaviors, or rapid mood cycling.

However, it can be very difficult to confirm if a patient has bipolar depression when the person's mental health history is not clear for a manic or hypomanic episode. In mania/hypomania, a person experiences an elevated mood state that can cause a whole range of difficulties, but often that person experiences it as a time of more productivity, creativity, ambition and energy. A thorough psychiatric assessment, therefore, should always include questions asking about the presence of these different mood states because of their implications on treatment and illness course.

When I cannot confirm a bipolar illness, but it is a possibility even after a thorough assessment, the conversation with the patient around treatment involves detailing the risks and benefits of treating the symptoms as a unipolar depression (i.e., classic depression) and the risks and benefits of treating the symptoms as a bipolar depression. Sometimes, if I believe the

risk for a bipolar illness is low, I recommend trying an antidepressant first because unipolar depression is more common than bipolar depression and these treatments are quite effective and have few side effects. Also, it is not uncommon for patients to switch antidepressants too quickly when an adequate dose of a medication has not been reached; this may be another possible reason for poor response to treatment. So, I will suggest a six to eight-week trial of a therapeutic dose of an antidepressant first. Another reason for this approach is that I can monitor how the person responds to the antidepressant, which would be more information for me to work with as we hone in on the correct diagnosis and treatment. Antidepressants are also very effective in anxiety disorders, which can accompany the depressive mood. I then warn patients to look out for symptoms that may signal mania or hypomania and have them fill out a daily mood chart.

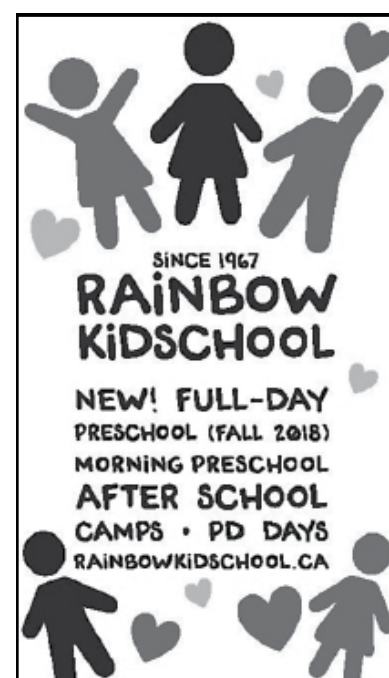
In patients with a history more suggestive of a bipolar illness, other medications need to be discussed, usually in the drug classes of antipsychotics and mood stabilizers. It can be difficult for patients to accept they need these kinds of medications and so I take the time to tell patients that although these medications have specific labels, they are still used for all sorts of disorders. Medications that are effective for depression in a bipolar illness include quetiapine (Seroquel), lamotrigine (Lamictal), lithium (Carbolith) and lurasidone (Latuda).

Below are six questions to consider (known as the Rapid Mood Screener II) when wondering if your depression is a unipolar or bipolar depression:

1. Have you had more than six different periods of time of at least two weeks when you felt deeply depressed?
2. Did you have problems with depression before the age of 18?
3. Have you ever had to stop or change your antidepressant because it made you highly irritable or hyper?
4. Have you ever had a period of time of more than four days during which you were more talkative than normal, with thoughts racing in your head?
5. Have you ever had a period of time of more than four days during which you felt any of the following: unusually happy, unusually outgoing, or unusually energetic?
6. Have you ever had a period of time of more than four days during which you needed much less sleep than usual?

If you answer yes to four or more of these questions, this is suggestive of a bipolar illness and it is worth following up with your doctor and getting a referral to see a psychiatrist – this may explain why your antidepressant drugs have not been working.

Sarah Chan is a psychiatrist who works at The Ottawa Hospital and in the community. She is writing this column to increase community awareness and education about mental health. Dr. Chan is interested in receiving suggestions for topics for future articles. Please send your emails to: Drchanvistas@gmail.com. And for anyone interested, she has started a psychiatry blog: www.sarahchan.ca.



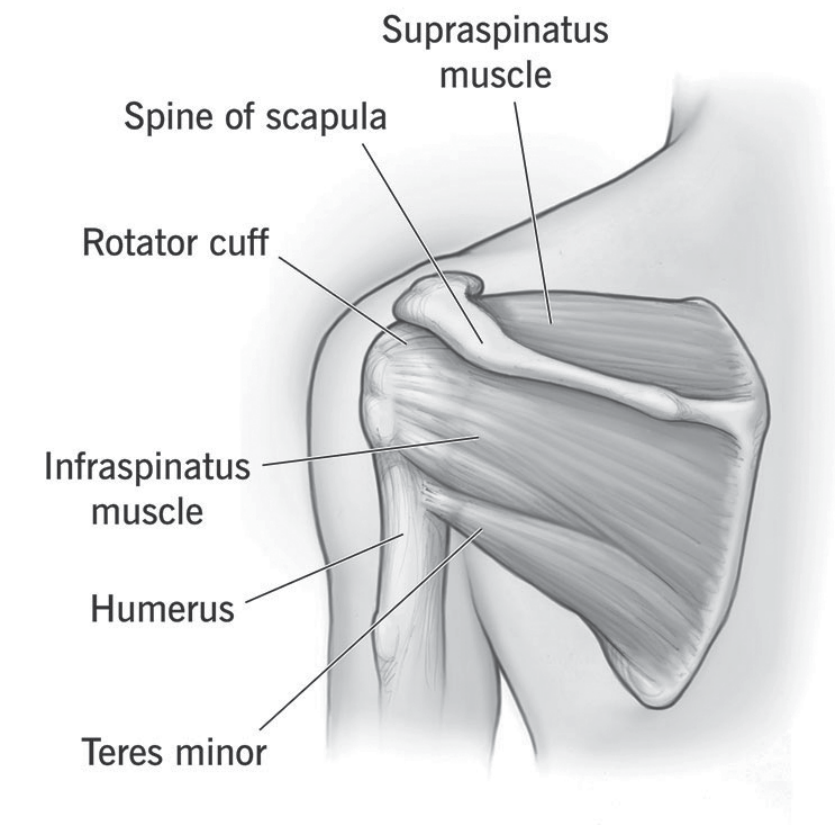
HEALTH & FITNESS

PHYSIOTHERAPY BENEFICIAL IN
TREATMENT OF ROTATOR CUFF INJURIES

By Sue Reive, Physiotherapist

It can happen suddenly – you lift something heavy and feel a sharp twinge of pain in your shoulder – or the pain develops gradually over time in your shoulder despite no traumatic event. Whether it’s a sudden or an insidious onset, rotator cuff tendinopathy is painful and can interfere with activities of daily living. Opening doors, pulling a sweater off over your head, and reaching are painful and difficult to perform. Physiotherapy is beneficial in guiding the healing process in rotator cuff injuries and in preventing a secondary frozen shoulder from developing.

Rotator cuff



Cleveland Clinic ©2023

The muscles and tendons in your rotator cuff surround your shoulder joint and hold the bones together. Image from my.clevelandclinic.org/health/body/rotator-cuff

The shoulder joint consists of the arm bone (humerus), the shoulder blade (scapula), and the collarbone (clavicle). Where the clavicle meets the scapula is the roof of the shoulder joint (the acromioclavicular or AC joint). The shoulder joint is a ball and socket joint between the humerus and the socket on the scapula. It is held together by a fibrous capsule that is reinforced by ligaments and the rotator cuff (RTC) tendons (supraspinatus, infraspinatus, subscapularis and teres minor). Note that the tendon is continuous with the muscle and attaches the muscle to the bone. A small sac of fluid called a bursa lies between the supraspinatus tendon and the AC joint to prevent friction or rubbing of the tendon.

The articulation between the humerus and the shallow scapular socket looks like a golf ball on a tee. This allows for a lot of shoulder mobility but also requires the RTC to offer dynamic stability. The four tendons all must work together to keep the humeral head centred in its socket when the shoulder moves. If one of the tendons is injured, weakened or tight, the humeral head tends to shift in the socket causing pinching of the tendons or bursa (impingement). Indeed, a muscle imbalance can cause poor biomechanics in the shoulder. Often the pectoral and subscapularis muscles are tight, causing rounded shoulders and limited motion. More importantly, the rounded shoulder can cause pinching of the supraspinatus tendon, which is vulnerable as it runs under the AC joint to attach to the humerus.

Degenerative changes in the AC joint can rub the supraspinatus tendon causing fraying and damage (tendinosis) making it more susceptible to tearing. Trauma such as lifting or falling can damage the tendon. Patients will have pain when lifting their arm and possibly limited mobility. Sleep is often disturbed.

Tendinitis of RTC tendons is a spectrum; it can be mild inflammation due to micro-tearing or a partial or full-thickness tear. Tearing is more common in older individuals due to degenerative changes in the tendon. A thorough assessment will help with the diagnosis. Selective tissue testing will determine which tendon is strained and the extent to which it is injured. Marked weakness and pain on resisted muscle testing could indicate a partial tear. An ultrasound is helpful to confirm the diagnosis if a partial or full-thickness tear is suspected. Treatment varies depending on the extent of injury and the stage of healing. Active assisted exercises to maintain range of motion while allowing the tendon to heal is essential to help prevent a frozen shoulder.

With a frozen shoulder, the fibrous capsule tightens up and mobility becomes extremely restricted. Once active movement is relatively pain-free, strengthening exercises can begin.

Rest and avoiding activities and sports that aggravate the tendon are important. Most mild RTC tendinopathies heal within six weeks. Partial tears could take six months, while full-thickness tears may require surgery to suture the tendon.

Anti-inflammatory medications and ice can help in the acute stage. Occasionally, when medication, rest and exercise do not relieve the pain, a steroid injection can help.

Rotator cuff tendon injury is a common injury, which if not treated can lead to reduced mobility, weakness and difficulty with activities of daily living. Physiotherapy is beneficial to heal the tendon and allow the return to normal activities.

SUE REIVE, BSCPT, MCPA
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A black and white photograph of a dog, possibly a Labrador Retriever, looking up with its mouth open in a happy expression. It is holding a rectangular wooden sign that reads 'HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY' in white, hand-painted capital letters. The background is white with several small, stylized heart shapes scattered around the dog.

SENIORS SPACE

THE STORY OF BOB AND LINDA

By Beverly Ensom, Member of the Ellwood House Board of Directors

Bob Gravelle is Ellwood House's security tenant – he looks after some of the regular chores and acts as backup when the property manager is not there. He's also a school crossing guard. You'll see him out helping the children of Alta Vista Public School cross the Bank Street and Randall Avenue intersection. He's lived at Ellwood House for 19 years.

Linda has lived at Ellwood House for 13 years. That's right – they did not arrive as a married couple. They were married four years ago in the lounge at Ellwood House by the Rev. Peter Crosby, of St. Thomas the Apostle church, on whose campus Ellwood House stands.

Bob arrived at Ellwood House with his first wife, Elaine. They were young seniors at the time, but Elaine was not well. She had developed Lambert-Eaton syndrome, a rare neuromuscular disorder, and that marked the end of their world travels. When Linda arrived at Ellwood House, she and Elaine became good friends; and Linda would sit with Elaine when Bob went to his once-a-week bowling. Elaine passed away in 2017.



Linda and Bob Gravelle in their Ellwood House apartment. Photo credit: B. Ensom

The apartment featured in photos on Ellwood House's website is Bob and Linda's. They were pleased when it became available shortly after they got married.

"It was better to start afresh, in neither person's old apartment," says Linda.

They kindly allow visiting dignitaries to check it out, when it's convenient. Combining two households wasn't easy, says Linda. "There had to be a lot of give and take."

Bob and Linda are both longtime Ottawans, although Linda is originally from Peterborough. After raising her children in Ottawa, she worked at Sears for 25 years. She was one of Sear's knowledgeable appliance salespeople. Luckily, she retired before the company closed all its Canadian stores, so she feels lucky to have her pension.

Bob started his career in the military, where he worked on the Distant Early Warning Line, a system of radar stations to detect incoming Soviet bombers during the Cold War. Then he spent eight years owning, training and driving racehorses at Rideau Carleton Raceway, Connaught Park and Blue Bonnets Raceway in Montreal. Later, he worked in security with the federal government, where he was heavily involved in the lead-up to Y2K – remember that? After taking an early retirement, he became a security consultant, advising private companies and members of Parliament about the security of their private homes.

Bob spearheads many of the social events at Ellwood House – Canada Day, Grey Cup, Oktoberfest, Christmas, Tuesday afternoon tea times; they're all good opportunities to socialize. Bob operates the BBQ and is in charge of the furniture for most events; Linda and several other tenants help in the kitchen.

"It's an apartment building – not a retirement home," they say. "We all have busy lives, but it's nice to get together with our neighbours."



Bob Gravelle at his crossing guard station. Photo credit: B. Ensom

JUST FOR FUN

By Alicia Cuadra

Q: What do you call a romance that starts at the aquarium?
A: Guppy love!

Q: What did the paper clip say to the magnet?
A: I find you very attractive.

Q: What's Cupid's favourite band?
A: KISS!

Q: Who always has a date on Valentine's Day?
A: A calendar.

Q: Why did the bear keep getting fired?
A: He would always disappear in the winter.

Q: Where do snowmen love to dance?
A: At the snowball!

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CHAIR YOGA at Rideau Park United Church or on Zoom - Thursdays at 10:30am (60 mins). The Winter session runs to March 28th. A perfect practice for those who haven't practiced in awhile, have arthritis, fibromyalgia, past injuries or balance issues. Class packages available. Going on vacation? No worries. Your classes carry forward. Contact Marg Hillier, Certified Yoga Instructor, mhillier144@gmail.com or 613-299-8324. Visit www.newmoonyoga.ca for specific class dates and details.

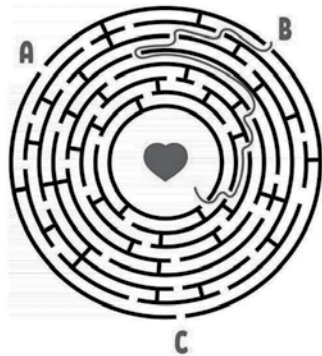
GENTLE MOBILITY HATHA MAT YOGA at Rideau Park United Church or on Zoom - Fridays at 10:30am (60 mins). The Winter session runs to March 29th. Get your body moving, increasing balance, strength, flexibility and breathing in a gentle, mindful practice. Class packages available. Going on vacation? No worries. Your classes carry forward. Contact Marg Hillier, Certified Yoga Instructor, mhillier144@gmail.com or 613-299-8324. Visit www.newmoonyoga.ca for specific class dates and details.

SKYLAR'S KIDS PAGE ANSWERS

Answer Key



Maze Game



SENIORS SPACE

PERLEY HEALTH COMMITS TO DOUBLING NUMBER OF SENIORS AND VETERANS SERVED

By Peter McKinnon

In 2023, Perley Health's Board of Directors established a new commitment for the organization: doubling the number of seniors and veterans it serves by 2035. The commitment is just the latest step in Perley Health's evolution.

Established in 1995 to provide long-term care (LTC) to 450 seniors, including 250 veterans, Perley Health is now widely recognized as one of Canada's most progressive and innovative LTC homes. Today, it also features 139 independent-living apartments, a research centre, a classroom for students enrolled in Algonquin College's Personal Support Worker and Registered Practical Nurse programs, and much more. These additions, along with the success of a series of recent and ongoing initiatives, put the goal of doubling the number of seniors served well within reach.

The most significant recent achievement is the completion of Perley Health Foundation's Answering the Call campaign, which raised \$10 million. Thanks to the support of generous individual and corporate donors, work is well underway on several projects that support Perley Health's larger goal of transforming care for seniors and Veterans across Canada.

The Perley Health Centre of Excellence in Frailty-Informed Care™ (CoE), established in 2019, is central to this goal. The CoE aims to set new standards for seniors' care by facilitating applied research that fuels innovation in education, best practices, and knowledge translation. During 2023, CoE studies appeared in several peer-reviewed journals and CoE researchers presented at multiple conferences. In June, the CoE hosted its first-ever international conference: a three-day event highlighting the experiences, perspectives and needs of non-professional caregivers – typically family members.

Further supporting the goal of serving more seniors and veterans was the decision to assume full control of The Care Clinic at Perley Health. Formerly operated in partnership with the University of Ottawa and known as the Interprofessional Clinic, The Care Clinic provides audiology services, physiotherapy, and massage and speech therapies, to residents, tenants and members of the general public.

In hopes of accommodating more seniors and veterans, Perley Health continues to explore expansion options. This involves close collaboration with the Government of Ontario, which approved operational funding for more than 200 new LTC beds at Perley Health. Securing the financing required for construction, however, has so far proven difficult – a problem shared by all non-profit LTC homes in Ontario. Perley Health has identified a series of potential solutions to the problem and shared them with government officials working on LTC reform.

These officials are also interested in how Perley Health houses and cares for residents living with both dementia and multiple other health conditions – a population expected to grow significantly in the next 20 years. Coping with this growth is a major obstacle for LTC reform. Along with the region's only Behavioural Support Unit, Perley Health also operates respite care and day programs. Other aspects of Perley

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Answering the Call Campaign Cabinet L to R: Guy Thibault, Louise Mercier, Rick Campagna, Delphine Haslé, Kammal Tannis, Erin Binks, Mariette MacIsaac, Micheal Burch, Daniel Charron, John Jarvis, Chloe Allaham (missing from photo: Kristan Birchard, Paul Fortin, Adam Kane, Colleen McBride, Walter Robinson, Jonathan Westeinde)

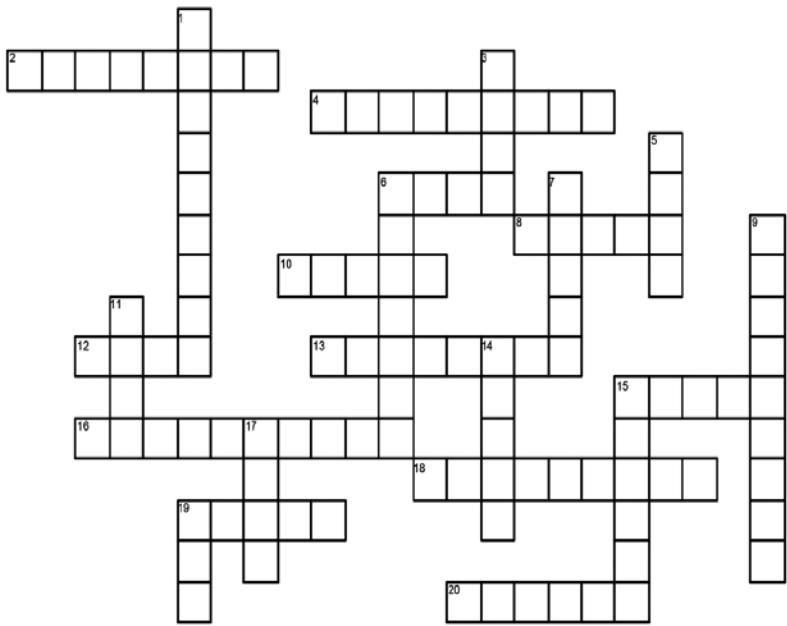
Health, such as rent-geared-to-income apartments for seniors – often in combination with assisted-living services – are also of interest to officials working on LTC reform.

Throughout 2024, Perley Health will prepare and plan to add capacity as a first step toward doubling the number of seniors served. The organization's ability to continually deliver exceptional care and to increase its contribution to the community is made possible by broad collaboration among staff, volunteers, residents, tenants, families, donors and various organizations. This sense of shared purpose both defines and inspires the entire Perley Health community.

SKYLAR'S KIDS PAGE

CROSSWORD

Valentine's Day Crossword Fun



ACROSS

- 2 A piece of jewelry worn around one's neck.
- 4 _____ and girlfriend.
- 6 "Be _____."
- 8 School children often exchange these on Valentine's Day.
- 10 He shoots invisible arrows to make people fall in love.
- 12 The most popular flower for Valentine's Day.
- 13 Valentine's Day falls on _____ 14.
- 15 "_____ Valentine's Day!"
- 16 A safe place to store jewelry. (Two words.)
- 18 My friend gave me heart-shaped box full of _____.
- 19 Bees make this substance, which is also a nickname for someone who is loved.
- 20 St. Valentine is known as the patron saint of _____.

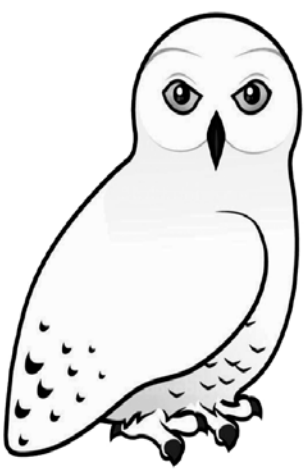
DOWN

- 1 "Will you be my _____?"
- 3 Husband and _____.
- 5 In "XOXOXOX," an X represents this action.
- 6 Did the mail carrier leave any Valentines in your _____?
- 7 School children sometimes celebrate with a Valentine's Day _____.
- 9 A stuffed animal often given as a Valentine's gift. (Two words.)
- 11 "I _____ you."
- 14 Bow and _____.
- 15 Children may read and eat candy _____.
- 17 A man usually gives a woman a _____ when he asks her to marry him.
- 19 In "XOXOXOX," an O represents this action.

©2008, The Holiday Zone <http://www.theholidayzone.com/>



Search the entire paper for these seasonal items.



FILL IN THE BLANKS



Valentine's Day



Word Fill-In for Kids

The kids of classroom _____ were busy getting ready for their Valentine's Day
number

Party. They had spent hours decorating _____ boxes with brightly
noun

colored _____ and hearts made out of _____
plural noun plural noun

Their teacher _____ streamers
verb (past tense) adjective

throughout the classroom. Trays of _____ cookies and pitchers
adjective

of _____ juice were ready to be served after recess. Everyone was
fruit or vegetable

eager to pass out their valentines. They had worked hard to _____ their
verb

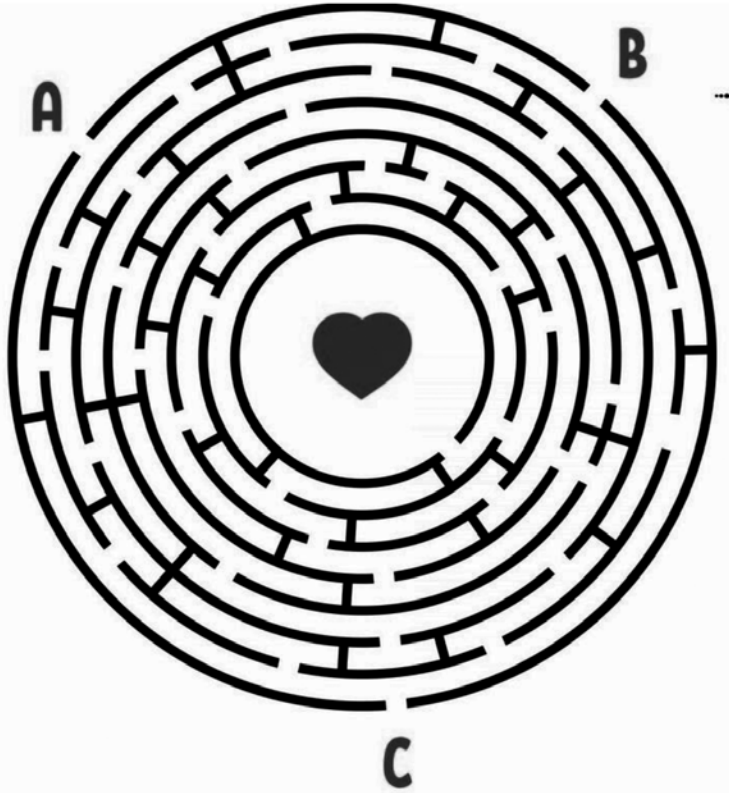
name _____ on each envelope. There were cards with chocolate
adverb

_____ attached, cards sealed with scratch n' sniff stickers that smelled like
plural noun

_____ and cards with characters from _____
food favorite show or movie

This was going to be the _____ Valentine's Day ever!
adjective ending in -est

SOLVE THE MAZE



UPCOMING EVENTS



ALTA VISTA LIBRARY

For the most current updates as well as information about available services, please visit www.biblioottawalibrary.ca or call 613-580-2940.

The Library's hours are as follows:

- Monday to Thursday: 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.
- Friday: 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Saturday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Sunday: CLOSED*

*The Greenboro branch at 363 Lorry Greenberg Drive is open on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CLOSED – Monday, February 19 – Family Day

Please note the following when visiting:

- You can place holds online at www.biblioottawalibrary.ca or by calling InfoService at 613-580-2940.
- Public computer use is currently limited to two hours per user per day. To reserve a computer ahead of time, reservations can be made either at the branch or online from home.
- All seating is now available.
- Meeting and program rooms are now available for booking.
- Please visit our website for the most up-to-date information with regards to programming.
- Outdoor book drops are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Museum passes are available once again on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please contact the museum in question before you visit to inquire about hours, closures, protocol etc.

FRIENDS OF THE OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOOK SALE

The Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Book Sale is on at the Alta Vista Branch. Books, music CDs and DVD movies are available for children, teens, and adults in both English and French.

BOARD GAME AND PUZZLE SWAP

The Alta Vista Branch is now hosting a small, self-serve board game and puzzle swap, located on the shelves next to the washrooms on the main floor. Bring in a complete board game or puzzle and trade it in for one that is "new to you." Please make sure that any games or puzzles that are brought in are complete with no pieces missing

AWESOME AUTHORS CONTEST (AGES 9 to 18)

If you're between the ages of 9 and 18, the **Awesome Authors Youth Writing Contest** is a fantastic opportunity to showcase your storytelling prowess and join a community brimming with creativity and passion! You could also stand a chance to win some exciting awards!

There are seven categories: short story, poetry, comic, nouvelle, poésie, bande dessinée and book cover. Submissions are welcomed in English and French.

The deadline for submissions is February 23 at 11:59 p.m. A valid library card is required to enter. Winners will be notified by email in April.

CHILDRENS PROGRAMMING

Bilingual Family Storytime

Stories, rhymes, and songs for children of all ages and their parents or caregivers. Bilingual. Drop-in program. Thirty minutes.

Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. until February 28.

Bilingual Babytime

Stories, rhymes, songs, and activities for babies (ages 0 to 18 months) and a parent/caregiver. Bilingual. Drop-in program. Thirty minutes.

Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. until February 29.

Stay and Play (NEW)

Meet new friends after Storytime! Chat and play with puppets, building blocks, crafts and much more. Bilingual. Drop-in program. Sixty minutes.

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 11 a.m., until February 29.

Arabic Storytime (NEW!)

Arabic Stories, rhymes, and songs for children of all ages and their parents or caregivers. Drop-in program. Forty-five minutes.

Saturdays, February 24 and March 23 at 3 p.m.

Lego® Block Party

Building Boom! Show off your architectural creativity with Lego®! Drop-in program. Sixty minutes.

Saturdays at 11 a.m., until February 24. Ages 4 to 12 (children ages 4 to 6 must have adult supervision).

Crafternoon!

Come crafting at the library, we have all the supplies you need to satisfy your creativity! Drop-in program. Sixty minutes.

Fridays, February 16, 23 and March 1 at 4 p.m. Ages 4 to 12.

ADULT PROGRAMMING

The Sub-Zero Stitch-Up (NEW!)

Find warmth in the winter season with camaraderie, conversation and crafting at this casual, drop-in meet-up! Bring your own craft project and supplies to work on in the good company of your neighbourhood and community.

All levels of interest and ability are welcome. Bring your knitting, crochet, hand-stitching, colouring, drawing, etc. (nothing messy or requiring machinery please!). Don't have a project? No problem! Options will be provided.

Thursdays February 8 and 22 at 7 p.m. Sixty minutes.

English Conversation Group (NEW!)

Practice your English conversation skills in a relaxed and friendly environment. All levels are welcome in this free program. Drop-in.

Mondays, 1–2:30 p.m. Ninety minutes. No group on February 19 or 26.

Tuesdays, 7–8 p.m. Sixty minutes.

French Conversation Group (Intermediate)

Improve your spoken French in a relaxed setting. This group is for those at an intermediate level. No registration required.

Wednesdays, 6:30–7:45 p.m.

Sleuth Hounds Mystery Book Club

Share the enjoyment of good mysteries in a relaxed atmosphere. Join us for discussions on the third Thursday of every month 6:30–8 p.m. All are welcome.

Thursday, February 15

New authors discussion

Thursday, March 21

Karin Slaughter – Will Trent series

Book Banter

Share the enjoyment of good books in a relaxed atmosphere. Join us for discussions on the first Thursday of every month 2–3 p.m. All are welcome.

Thursday, February 1

Horse

by Geraldine Brooks

Thursday, March 7

Eleanor Oliphant is Completely

Fine by Gail Honeyman

Infusions Littéraires

Partagez avec nous le plaisir des livres dans une ambiance détendue. Joignez-vous à nous pour une discussion. De 14h00 à 15h00.

Le lundi 26 février

Noires sous surveillance

de Robyn Maynard

Le lundi 18 mars

Les passants de Lisbonne

de Philippe Besson

ONLINE COLLECTIONS AND SERVICES

Please check out some of the activities and resources that we have for adults, teens, and kids alike.

These resources include Digital eBooks and Audiobooks, Language learning courses, Streaming movies, free magazines and newspapers, and Children's resources for educational videos and online books. A valid Library card is required.

UPCOMING EVENTS

COMMUNITY EVENTS

RIDEAU PARK UNITED CHURCH

2203 Alta Vista Drive
613-733-3156; www.rideaupark.ca

Wintertime Youth Rally: February 2–4. Join the group from across the region for lively outdoor/indoor winter activities, food and music. More information: sclifton@rideaupark.ca.

Valentine’s Day Tea Party: Tuesday, February 13, 1:30–3 p.m. Hosted by the United Church Women, enjoy tea and an assortment of delicious baked goods, served in Beecroft Hall.

Pancake Supper: Tuesday February 13, 5:30-7:30 p.m. hosted by the 28th Scouts. Tickets: Adults – \$13, Children –\$7, available at the door or in advance (Feb. 7, 10:45–11:30 a.m. at the church or by email at 28scoutpancakes@gmail.com).

Drums Alive: Drop-in drumming class, for all ages, resumes in January. For more information, contact choirdirector@rideaupark.ca.

Sunday @ Four Series: You are invited to Andrew Ager’s Sunday afternoon piano/organ concerts, held periodically, but always at 4 p.m. Watch and listen for them!

50+ Fitness with Faiza: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m.

Yoga with Margaret: Chair Yoga, Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.; Gentle Mat Yoga, Fridays, 10:30 a.m.

Meditation Group Online: Thursdays, 10 a.m., by Zoom. Contact sclifton@rideaupark.ca for an invitation.

Euchre Club: Thursdays, 1 p.m. in the parlour. For information, contact Rod Hagglund at rhagglund@rogers.com.

Knitting and Quilting Groups: Knitting on Mondays, 1–3:30 p.m. and quilting on Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.–12 p.m. For more information, contact Doreen Hamilton at prayerchain@rideaupark.ca.

Alcoholics Anonymous: OASIS has meetings at the Church, Mondays, 8–9 p.m. while Twelve Steps to Serenity also holds sessions on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.

EMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH

691 Smyth Road
Office: 613-733-0437; Email: office@emmanuelunited.ca; Website: www.emmanuelunited.ca

Take Time to be Wholey Seniors’ Exercises: Mondays, 10:30–11:30 a.m: Chair yoga, mat-free.

Fridays, 10:30–11:30 a.m.: Light exercises using free weights and exercise bands.

Christian Meditation: Mondays, 7–8 p.m. If you wish to learn how to meditate or join us, contact our office for the Zoom link.

Thursday Morning Discussion Group: 10–11:30 a.m., by Zoom. The group will be looking at the book *Meditations on the Parables of Jesus* by Thomas Keating.

Friday Night at the Movies: February 23, 7 p.m.: See *Brian and Charles*, filmed in rural Wales. Watch as a lonely inventor finally succeeds and his robot, named Charles, awakens. After he discovers his activated robot wandering outside of his workshop, Brian brings it into his house. Lovable quirky characters. Funny, heartwarming and engaging. Will be enjoyed by the whole family. Free admission. Everyone is welcome. Drinks and snacks available.

OTTAWA HUMANE SOCIETY

Would you like to help us support the animals at the Ottawa Humane Society? Join us at the Auxiliary’s monthly business meetings from 1:30–3 p.m. the first Thursday of every month (except July, August and December). We meet at the animal shelter, 245 West Hunt Club Road across from Lowe’s. The next meeting is March 7. For more information, contact Loreen, loreenohs@gmail.com, or go to facebook.com/OttawaHumaneSocietyAuxiliary.

PROBUS CLUB OF OTTAWA ALTA VISTA

PROBUS Ottawa Alta Vista is welcoming new members from the Alta Vista area. Join your fellow retirees, near-retirees and want-to-be retirees for interesting speakers and discussions, not to mention relaxed socializing. We will be meeting on Wednesday, February 28 at 10 a.m. at Gloucester Presbyterian Church, 91 Pike Street, for a presentation about Artificial Intelligence. See our website www.probusoav.ca for more detailed information.

‘NEW YEAR / NEW VIEW’ FINE ART EXHIBIT

Kanata Civic Art Gallery
January 10 to March 3

The gallery welcomes 11 new-juried local artists featured in this show together with our regular members. Over 70 artworks in this exhibition in a variety of mediums, featuring paintings, sculpture, mosaic, photography and textile art.

The Kanata Civic Art Gallery is located at the John Mlacak Centre, 2500 Campeau Drive in Kanata. Hours of operation: Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 1 to 8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday 1 to 5 p.m.

For more information, visit: www.kanatagallery.ca.

ARTEAST SHOW ‘IMAGERIES’

January 8 to March 4

Arteast presents IMAGERIES, a new show at François Dupuis Recreation Centre. It features wonderful animal paintings by Carole Renaud; colourful works by Rola Alameddine Bleik, mixed media artworks by Elena Nahum Leroy, and large abstract paintings by Fitabella.

Come and enjoy a very pleasant eye-warming display of art in the cold of January.

For more info, email francoisdupuis@arteastottawa.com.

FEVER’S CANDLELIGHT VALENTINE’S DAY SHOW

Thursday February 8 at 6:30 p.m. at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre

Candlelight concerts bring the magic of a live, multi-sensory musical experience to awe-inspiring locations. Get your tickets now to discover romantic music for Valentine’s Day at Carleton Dominion-Chalmers Centre under the gentle glow of candlelight at: feverup.com/m/147945.



Steven A. Neal,
Lawyer

P. 613.737.4140

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Suite 305
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Are you buying or selling your home? Refinancing? Looking to revise your will or grant a power of attorney? Call today to find out how we can help you! We also offer notary services.

Steven was born and raised in Alta Vista, where he lives with his wife and their two boys. He studied and practiced law in Saskatchewan from 2009 to 2016. Steven has been practicing in association with Cheryl Payette (formerly of Conlin & Payette) since 2017.

UPCOMING EVENTS

LONDON TRIO PLUS

Saturday, February 10, at Glebe-St. James United Church (650 Lyon Street South).

10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.: Workshop on singing Gospel Music; 7 p.m.: Evening concert of Gospel and Spiritual music.

See the January edition of VISTAS for details.

VALENTINE’S CABARET

February 16, 7 p.m. at Rideau Park United Church, 2203 Alta Vista Dr.

New Opera Lyra presents a “Valentine’s Cabaret,” with Carmen Harris and Adam Sperry performing your favourite love songs from the 20s to the 80s. There will be refreshments and a silent auction in support of New Opera Lyra. Admission is \$20, either through Eventbrite or at the door. Full information at newoperalyra.ca.

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE / LAMOUR, TOUJOURS LAMOUR

Presented by Canadian Centennial Choir (ccc-ccc.ca)

Sunday, March 3 at 3 p.m.

Centretown United Church, 507 Bank Street

Tickets for this concert: Adult: \$25; Senior/Student: \$20 – Available at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/6144455

Love: not just the mushy kind! We’ll sing of love of nature and place, spiritual love, lost love and crazy love. The repertoire will span hundreds of years, from Renaissance madrigals to recent pop arrangements. Full choir and small groups. With special guest Kim Farris-Manning, piano

OTTAWA’S SEEDY SATURDAY



The Alta Vista Community Association Local Food Committee, a group of community gardeners interested in food security, is working with Just Food and Seeds of Diversity to host this event in Ottawa for 2024.

Where? Emmanuel United Church, 691 Smyth Road

When? Saturday, March 2 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

What’s going on?

- Seed sales and exchanges
- Workshops on seed starting, composting, invasive species and native bee habits and habitats
- Local artisan and cuisine offerings

How much is it? Admission and parking are free. Local bus #55 services Emmanuel United Church, an accessible site.

What can I bring? Your own reusable bags and, if you have some, your seeds for exchange.

Need to know more? Contact altavistaseeds@gmail.com.



WINTER HOME
MAINTENANCE IDEAS



- Reverse the direction of ceiling fans to force warm air down into the room.
- Check batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Keep large snowdrifts from piling up against your home.
- During deep cold spells, <15° for more, keep interior doors open to encourage heat circulation.
- Install or increase attic insulation or have a professional inspection if you’re concerned about heat loss through the roof.



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MOVIES 'N STUFF

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www.moviesnstuff.com

February 6th

The Holdovers

A curmudgeonly instructor at a New England prep school remains on campus during Christmas break to babysit a handful of students with nowhere to go. He soon forms an unlikely bond with a brainy but damaged troublemaker, and with the school's head cook, a woman who just lost a son in the Vietnam War. Major Oscar buzz for this one - see it now!

Shetland: Seasons 6,7 and 8

At long last, the last 3 Shetland seasons are available to rent! You've seen the first 5, now hunker down and see the next 3!!

Eileen

In 1964 Massachusetts, a young secretary becomes enchanted by Rebecca, the glamorous new counsellor at the prison where she works. Their budding friendship soon takes a twisted turn when Rebecca reveals a dark secret. Anne Hathaway and Thomasin McKenzie star.

May December

Twenty years after their notorious tabloid romance, a married couple buckle under the pressure when a Hollywood actress meets them to do research for a film about their past. Julianne Moore and Natalie Portman star.

Blood on the Crown

Right after World War I in 1919, citizens of Malta rise up to seek independence from British rule, but the army quashes the riots, the government covers up the bloodbath, and more than 100 Maltese are jailed. Hollywood legends Harvey Keitel and Malcolm McDowell star.

The Tomorrow Man

Ed Hemsler spends his life preparing for a disaster that may never come, and Ronnie Meisner spends her life shopping for things she may never use. These two people will try to find love while trying not to get lost in each other's stuff. Blythe Danner and John Lithgow star.

The Most Reluctant Convert

An elder C.S. Lewis looks back on his remarkable journey from hard-boiled atheist to the most renowned Christian writer of the past century. Max McLean's performance brings Lewis' story of grief, loss and redemption to life on screen.

Miss Scarlet & the Duke: Season Four

Eliza Scarlet joins Detective Inspector William Wellington of Scotland Yard, known as "The Duke" in this fourth installment of their thrilling detective adventures!

The Mayor of Kingstown: Season Two

In the wake of the Kingstown Prison riot, violence and chaos ensue in the newly formed tent city. Mike and Bunny discuss what must be done to solve the leadership void on the inside and Kyle begins his new job with the Michigan State Police. Jeremy Renner returns!

What Happens Later

Snowed-in at a regional airport overnight, ex-lovers Willa and Bill realize they're still attracted to each other -- but also still equally annoyed with each other. As they unpack the riddle of their mutual past and compare their lives to the dreams they once shared, they begin to wonder if their reunion is a mere coincidence or something more enchanted. Meg Ryan and David Duchovny star.

Trolls Band Together

The Trolls return! Poppy discovers that Branch and his four brothers were once part of her favourite boy band. When one of his siblings, Floyd, gets kidnapped by a pair of nefarious villains, Branch and Poppy embark on a harrowing and emotional journey to reunite the other brothers and rescue Floyd from a fate even worse than pop culture obscurity.

February 13th

The Marvels

Carol Danvers, aka Captain Marvel, has reclaimed her identity from the tyrannical Kree and taken revenge on the Supreme Intelligence. However, unintended consequences see her shouldering the burden of a destabilized universe. Brie Larson returns!

Priscilla

When teenager Priscilla Beaulieu meets Elvis Presley at a party, the man who's already a meteoric rock 'n' roll superstar becomes someone entirely unexpected in private moments: a thrilling crush, an ally in loneliness, and a gentle best friend. Excellent reviews for this Sofia Coppola directed biopic.

Beyond Paradise: Season 1

After leaving the tropical paradise of Saint Marie in search of a quieter life, Humphrey Goodman takes up the position of DI in the sleepy Devon town of Shipton Abbott, the home of his fiancée Martha. However, their dream of living happily ever after together is quickly shattered when a crime wave unexpectedly hits the town. A spinoff of Death in Paradise.

Rose Plays Julie

An adopted girl seeks out her birth mother and discovers that the woman has no desire to meet her. What she discovers will change both of their lives. 95% positive reviews for this Irish drama/thriller!

The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes

Years before he becomes the tyrannical president of Panem, 18-year-old Coriolanus Snow remains the last hope for his fading lineage. With the 10th annual Hunger Games fast approaching, the young Snow becomes alarmed when he's assigned to mentor Lucy Gray Baird from District 12. Uniting their instincts for showmanship and political savvy, they race against time to ultimately reveal who's a songbird and who's a snake.

The Canterville Ghost

Sir Simon de Canterville has been haunting the grounds of his country estate for more than 300 years, but he soon meets his match when he tries to scare off a modern-day American family that just moved in. Featuring an all-star British cast of voice talents, including Stephen Fry, Hugh Laurie, Imelda Staunton and Toby Jones!

February 20th

Stefan Zweig: Farewell to Europe

In 1936, Stefan Zweig, the famed author, leaves Austria for South America. Being Jewish and hating the inhumanity that prevails in Germany while threatening his native country, he has decided to escape the specter of Nazism. Brazil is his chosen country, but once there he does not make statements denouncing Hitler and the German people, but instead focuses on the good that humanity has to offer.

The Morning Show: Season 2

An unapologetically candid drama that looks at the modern workplace through the lens of the people who help wake America up, pulling back the curtain on early morning TV. Jennifer Aniston and Reese Witherspoon star!

In Front of Your Face

A former actress with a secret returns to Seoul, South Korea, to live with her sister in a high-rise apartment. After considering a return to acting, she meets with a young director who he asks her to join his project, but she is harboring a grave secret.

Leo

A 74-year-old lizard named Leo and his turtle friend decide to escape from the terrarium of a Florida school classroom where they have been living for decades. Adam Sandler lends his voice talent.

The Queen's Man

Steve Talt used to bodyguard Farah Pahlavi, the exiled Queen of Iran. So when he discovers that her art was stolen by the Mafia in 1980, he sets out on a quixotic quest to recover it. A highly rated documentary!

February 27th

Next Goal Wins

With the 2014 World Cup qualifiers approaching, down-on-his-luck coach Thomas Rongen tries to turn the American Samoa soccer team into winners. Taika Waititi stars and directs!

Afire

Emotions run high for a group of friends in a holiday home by the Baltic Sea as the parched forest around them catches fire. Another critically lauded collaboration between director Christian Petzold, starring Thomas Schubert, Paula Beer

Inspector Manara: Seasons 1 and 2

Guido Caprino stars as Inspector Luca Manara, a fun-loving man and a supervisor's worst nightmare. Offbeat methods endear him to colleagues but drive superiors crazy. It's murder, love and suspense in Tuscany as Inspector Manara and friends field the cases and surprises that come their way. Popular Italian series comes to DVD!

In the Land of Saints and Sinners

Hoping to leave his dark past behind him, a former assassin leads a quiet life in a coastal Irish town, far from the political violence that grips the rest of the country. When menacing terrorists show up, he's drawn into an increasingly vicious game of cat and mouse and must choose between exposing his secret identity and defending his friends and neighbors. Liam Neeson always does this role well!

Family Switch

When family members switch bodies with each other during a rare planetary alignment, their hilarious journey to find their way back to normal will bring them closer together than they ever thought possible. Jennifer Garner and Ed Helms star.

Coming in March!!

All Creatures Season 4

The Color Purple

The Beekeeper

Ferrari

OSCAR WATCH:

It's that time again. And luckily, you'll be able to see Barbie, Oppenheimer, Past Lives and The Holdovers - all of which should be nominated for Best Picture by the time you read this - in the warmth of your own home!

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