



Primary Level Winners (L-R): Liam Wagner, Rivko Reimer, MacKenzie O'Brien. Back centre, Convenor Heather Poliquin. PHOTO: MARK WOERMKE

Madawaska Valley youth speak at legion

DANIELLE PAUL
BARRY'S BAY

Twelve young people, supported by members of their families, gathered at the Legion Branch 406 in Barry's Bay on the morning of Saturday, February 17, to participate in Stage One of the Royal Canadian Legion's annual Ontario Command Public Speaking Contest.

Of the twelve, four are students at Killaloe Public School, two attend George Vanier Catholic School in Combermere, and six are home schooled.

At the Primary Level, Liam Wagner from Killaloe Public School placed third for his speech on hockey, Rivko Reimer from George Vanier Catholic School placed second for his speech on chess, and Mackenzie O'Brien from Killaloe Public School took first place for her speech on cats.

At the Junior Level, Luetta Reimer from George Vanier came in third for her speech *Living Off-Grid*, Peter Shaw finished second for his speech *Stan Lee: Comic Book Creator*, and Elena Shaw

placed first for her speech *Barry's Bay, My Favourite Place to Live*.

At the Intermediate Level, Thomas Nicholson came in third place with *Why Things are Funny?*, John Paul Shaw achieved second with *The Battle of Britain*, and Madeleine Nicholson placed first with *The Different Kinds of Tears*.

Mark Woermke, one of the judges, praised the young speakers. "The quality of the speaking was very good. As a teacher, I see this as a good opportunity for young people to develop self-confidence and skill," he said.

Following the speeches, Judge Bev Burchat expressed her appreciation for those working behind the scenes. "Kudos to the legion for organizing this, and to the legion and community volunteers who made this possible."

The event was convened by Legion member Heather Poliquin. The judges were Bev Burchat, Michael Poliquin and Mark Woermke. Maureen Braceland and Bill Cunliffe took the speakers' registrations. Gwyneth Foster and Gladys Belisle were the time-keepers. Donna Chapeskie and Randy Burchat served as

Update on The Current

MADVALLEY MEDIA,
PUBLISHERS
MADAWASKA VALLEY

In its brief existence *The Madawaska Valley Current* has reached readers far beyond the Valley. Audience numbers have surpassed our expectations. Our website statistics show people accessing *The Current* from around the world during our first six weeks.

The Current online had over 7,000 sessions and articles were viewed over 22,000 times since early January. Our local print distribution of 500 was soon consumed at several outlets. The publishers thank you for reading *The Current*.

This early success results directly from the contributions of community residents who write articles and submit photos. There's an enormous wealth of talent and diversity in the Valley. Our heartfelt thanks to all *Current* contributors and sponsors.

Because *The Current* is primarily an online publication, we upload stories when they happen. The monthly print version provides a selection of the online articles. Visit our website madvalleycurrent.com regularly so you can check out the latest stories.

scrutineers, tabulating the scores. The participants, observers and volunteers were grateful to Kevin Chapeskie and Ethel Ryan who helped make the day run smoothly, and to Jenny Visneskie who prepared the hot lunch which everyone was invited to share.

The Royal Canadian Legion Public Speaking zone finals will be held in Eganville on Saturday March 3.

Reunion Cup to replace Heritage Cup tournament

VICKI GLOFCHESKIE
BARRY'S BAY

The Opeongo Heritage Cup has been put on hold this year but fortunately for all the hockey-lovers, there will be another game in town. The Reunion Cup will be held at the Paul J. Yakabuski Community Centre from March 23 to 25, 2018. The Minor Hockey teams will be kicking off the weekend with a tournament of their own on Thursday night, March 22.

The annual Opeongo Heritage Cup has become both a spectacle of local hockey talent and a homecoming of sorts. Most of the players in the tournament have moved away because of jobs or school commitments but the tournament brings them back home, to enjoy family, friends and some great hockey.

This year will be different.

Dan Conway, Chris Gienow and Bill Green have come together to organize the Reunion Cup hockey tournament. Chris said, "Hockey has always been a big attraction in the Madawaska Valley and we wanted to give the players and our community this opportunity to come together and enjoy a fun filled weekend.

Bill Green, the president of the Barry's Bay Area Minor Hockey Association said, "We have a team of dedicated volunteers that help make minor hockey what it is today and I congratulate them for their efforts. Hockey teaches them so many life lessons while having a lot of fun doing it. We are very excited to be part of the Reunion Cup Tournament."

There will be 90 players competing in three games Thursday evening so come out and support the teams.

Dan Conway credits them, "These young players are the future of hockey in this country."

This event is a definite boost to our local economy.

Wendell Henry of the Ash Grove Inn stated, "The Opeongo Heritage Cup was a very successful event for us and we're thrilled that Dan, Chris and Bill

have stepped forward to plan the Reunion Cup hockey tournament. The fact that the tournament is held in late March, near the end of the snowmobile season and going into the early spring, it helps our business get through the off-season hump."

Proceeds from the Reunion Cup Tournament will be donated to the Barry's Bay Area Minor Hockey Asso-

ciation. The organizers hope to raise between \$20,000 and \$25,000. It will be used to help pay for ice time, uniforms, equipment, insurance and a other expenses. Volunteers are needed. Contact Bill Green at presidentbay@gmail.com.

See The Current online for the Reunion Cup schedule www.madvalleycurrent.com

Castaway culture... on my desert island



Robert Howe, Madawaska Valley lawyer, shares his top picks.

I am destined to be a castaway on a deserted island. The island has fresh water and sufficient food to sustain my body—but what about my mind and soul?

What literature and music shall I bring along to feed them?

I am a Christian and so will pack my Holy Bible.

I should have some Shakespeare and some poetry. I shall combine the two and bring a collection of Shakespeare's sonnets. Love that iambic pentameter.

As for something closer to entertainment, I will pack John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. A good story, beautifully written.

And, for old times' sake, one of John Buchan's detective novels featuring Richard Hannay as the hero. One of Buchan's books, like Steinbeck's, was made into a movie bearing the book's title. In Buchan's case, it was *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. By the way, he was one and the same person as Baron Tweedsmuir of Elsfeld, the fifteenth Governor-General of Canada. As a very young boy, I once had a ride in the open

McLaughlin-Buick automobile that was used to tour Baron Tweedsmuir around parts of Ontario.

I think I would also want to have along one of James A. Michener's massive historical novels, perhaps *Hawaii*.

Turning to music, with what tunes shall I load my iPod?

A rousing classical piece to get me going in the morning would be essential. I think I shall bring Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture; perhaps the Boston Pops Orchestra's rendition complete with cannon fire finale.

I could not be without some Eric Clapton. In fact, I think I shall download two of his solo CDs, "Me and Mr. Johnson" his collection of Robert Johnson covers and his "Unplugged" album. Or perhaps instead of one or other of them, Clapton's first recorded vocals and some of his rawest guitar work with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, recorded in about 1966. My affection for Clapton dates back to attending a Cream concert at Massey Hall in Toronto in 1968. Oh yes, I must bring along some Beatles music, too: at least Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band and possibly the White Album as well.

And for something spiritual for bedtime, I shall bring along an album of the bluesy gospel stylings of The Blind Boys of Alabama.

Now all I will need is a device to recharge my iPod using solar power, and a large knapsack!

Revitalization funds for MV announced



Main Street revitalization initiative. PHOTO: SHARON GARDINER

ANYA GANSTERER
MADAWASKA VALLEY

Mayor Kim Love announced at the Finance & Administration Committee meeting on January 29 that Madawaska Valley Township is eligible to receive up to \$39,536 under Ontario's Main Street Revitalization Initiative.

The funding allocation, based on population, was announced by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) last week and will be administered through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). Municipalities will not be required to provide matching funds.

Finance & Administration Committee members discussed their intention that any funds received could be applied across all three communities.

To date, MV Township has not received further details about the funding criteria, suitable projects or what the township needs to do in order to obtain the money. Committee members said that the township must be vigilant to observe timelines and comply with the

requirements when they are eventually announced.

According to OMAFRA's press release, the money will help municipalities enhance and revitalize their downtown and main streets through improvements such as the installation of pedestrian crosswalks or landscaping.

Municipalities can also direct funding to local businesses to improve the appearance of storefronts; for example, by installing lighting or new signage.

Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Minister Responsible for Small Business, said, "Main streets are at the core of small, rural communities and are home to thousands of small businesses across the province. That's why our government is committed to ensuring they continue to remain vibrant hubs where residents meet, tourists visit and small businesses grow and prosper."

The Current will report further when more details become available. In the meantime, local businesses can dust off their revitalization ideas and be ready to suggest suitable projects.



Reader's Theatre

DANIELLE PAUL
MADAWASKA VALLEY

Residents who love to read aloud met with Opeongo Podcast Players (OPP) organizer Barry Conway at the Madawaska Valley Public Library on February 17 to plan the first Reader's Theatre podcast.

Conway is the driving force behind a new spoken-word project currently being developed under the guidance of Karen Filipkowski, CEO of the Barry's Bay Public Library. She and Conway are seeking volunteers to perform dramatic readings to both entertain and raise money for the library. The 90-minute to two-hour shows will also be broadcast worldwide via a podcast called *The Opeongo Line's Village Voice & Country Rambler*.

Volunteer readers at the first meeting were (above, L to R) Brenda Missen, Barry Conway, Gil Glofcheskie, Vicki Glofcheskie, Frances Mawson and Linda Shulist. Conway says he has been contacted by other people who are interested, including some international volunteers who will Skype in to participate. He notes, "We are a village—but we are also a global village."

The first OPP show is to be recorded during March Break (March 12 to 16) using the library as a base.

There will be three sets designed for readers of all ages—children up to eighth grade, teens and young adults and adult readers.

More information is available at the Madawaska Valley Public Library in Barry's Bay.

PORCH VIEWS

Who is a local? Diversity or division in the Madawaska Valley



MARK WOERMKE
MADAWASKA VALLEY

This article has been abridged for publication in the Current's print version. View the original at www.madvalleycurrent.com

A few years ago, comments made in reference to woodpile art and locals drove a wedge between residents. After a flurry of letters in what was then the only community newspaper, that conversation died down. However, the fact remains that Madawaska Valley residents should be working together to promote development and growth, not dividing themselves according to a length-of-stay criterion. This attitude is unwelcoming, discriminatory and it has the potential to jeopardize the future of the Madawaska Valley.

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM BINGO

I heard a great story recently about the late Teresa Mask Beanish, a life-long resident of the Madawaska Valley and a true community builder. About 40 years ago, a newcomer won the jackpot at a bingo in St. Hedwig's parish hall and a number of local ladies were overheard grumbling, "She's not even from here." Teresa turned to them and spoke with authority, "You be quiet. She bought her cards just like everyone else." I think that says it all. I could wrap up this piece right here, but there is a lot more to consider.

LOCAL AND LOCALISM

The noun *local*, as in "They're not locals," means an inhabitant of a particular place. So, any resident (full-time or part-time) of this particular place, the Madawaska Valley, is a local. We are all locals, but some of us (and I do think it is a minority) exhibit a discriminatory attitude we might call *localism*. When we fail to welcome, recognize or seriously consider the views of newcomers who have chosen to live, work, shop



Finding our way in the Madawaska Valley.

and pay taxes in the Madawaska Valley, and we justify this behaviour by saying they are "not from here," we are committing this injustice.

DIVISION

In my experience, some of us from the heritage families divide ourselves by ethnicity (Kashub or Polish or Irish or German or Wendish or French or Aboriginal), by religion (Catholic or Protestant), by community (Barry's Bay or Wilno or Combermere), and by politics (Liberal or Conservative or NDP). It is interesting that when newcomers arrive and try to get involved in our community, we temporarily let go of those internal prejudices and join forces.

We label ourselves *locals*, and them, *outsiders*—from-the-city, DPs, cottagers, hippies, draft-dodgers, high school teachers, artists, homeschoolers, Muslims, Academy people, and churchies. Even though these terms are often used negatively, they actually represent a remarkable diversity which could make our community rich, interesting and vibrant. Imagine what we could accomplish if we celebrated our differences and worked together for the common good.

SUSPICION AND INSECURITY

Combermere resident Lynne Boehme Yantha reminded me recently that our immigrant ancestors bequeathed to us "a pretty high degree of suspicion of outsiders." This may explain our tendency to localism because the larger ethnic groups who settled here had bad experiences with outsiders. The Irish were fleeing England's repression and refusal to alleviate the Potato Famine; the Kashubs and Poles were escaping Prussian or Austrian rule and Bismarck's Kulturkampf; and the Germans and Wends were seeking refuge from Prussia's wars, conscription and state control of their churches.

Once they obtained their own land in the Madawaska Valley a new set of outsiders "lorded it over" them. The landowners, magistrates or captains were replaced, sequentially, by lumber barons, railway officials, whiskey detectives, mining executives, government officials, rich American cottagers, summer residents from the cities including the middle-class, professional Poles who spoke "High Polish."

A TWO-WAY STREET

I sympathize with residents who don't feel accepted because they lack a prov-

enance of four generations in the graveyard, but, I think to fully explore this topic, we also have to recognize that newcomers have not always treated the locals with respect.

There is something to be said for living in a place for a while, learning a bit from the locals before criticizing or trying to change things. Rural folk may not have a lot of formal education, but they are wise and know the lay of the land. Newcomers who recognized this, like Catherine Doherty or Barney McCaffrey, got to know their neighbours and sought their advice when they first moved here. They integrated successfully and are legendary.

LOCALISM HURTS DEVELOPMENT

Several years ago, when I was attending the Wilno parish, the pastor spoke bluntly from the pulpit. He was responding to some “heritage family” parishioners who resented cottagers from Kaszuby retiring to the area, joining the parish and purchasing lots in the cemetery. The priest invited them take a look at the register and see how burials dramatically exceeded baptisms and marriages. Some of the baptisms and marriages weren't even for people who lived in the parish, their parents or grandparents did. He suggested that if they want to keep the parish open, they would have to be welcoming to “outsiders.”

He got it. We need newcomers. The Madawaska Valley is experiencing the same problems as other rural communities in Canada—youth out-migration, decline in the birthrate, and an aging population. We are struggling to maintain our population, so we should be attracting and welcoming new residents.

EDUCATION AND NEW BLOOD

While there are lots of children in the homeschool sub-community, the birth rate among residents who will send their children to publicly-funded schools is low and local schools have closed or are closing. When faced with declining enrolments, high schools can't offer a lot of elective courses or run a full range of extra-curricular activities. If we can't attract families, our schools will continue to shrink. Will teachers, medical professionals or entrepreneurs want to relocate here if there are limited opportunities for their children?

In terms of post-secondary training, residents have to leave to attend univer-

sities and colleges and obtain training. Once in urban centres, they often remain. We can't even get our act together to support a PSW course that will keep people close to home and train them for jobs that are needed right here, since our population is aging.

If the families don't come and residents don't stay, our tax base will continue to shrink. Who is going to serve our seniors if there are no schools? Who will work in our hospital? Where will the money come from to maintain our infrastructure? When one of my high school friend's great aunts learned that she was marrying a French Canadian from Ottawa, they said, “New blood is good.” The Madawaska Valley needs new blood. New blood in the form of population.

PROGRESSIVE ATTITUDES

Thankfully, not all heritage residents are localists. Lynne Boehme Yantha, like most folks in the Valley, has a welcoming and progressive outlook: “For me, if people integrate with the community in work, school, volunteerism, and take part in events, they are local.”

Lynne's mention of volunteerism reminds me that I have noticed that

boards of our institutions, organizations and service clubs are often made up of people who have moved to the area in the last 20 or 30 years. I thank them for taking an interest in our community and for their hard work in making the Madawaska Valley a better place. If some locals resent this, then they should ask themselves why they, themselves, are not stepping up to the plate. If we think it's ours, we better get off our duffs to nurture it. Otherwise, we are squandering our inheritance.

VALLEY PRIDE AND THE LAST WORD

We need a healthy dose of Madawaska Valley pride. We live here, raise families here, work here, pray here, go to school here, shop here, play here, pay our taxes here, get sick and get well here and die here. We are all local.

I think Bernadine Roslyn, a Madawaska Valley resident for over 35 years, deserves the last word. Her online comment from the Madawaska Valley Current expresses it best whether we were born here, moved here, or moved away and returned: “We all live here because we love the area. And all together we make one heck of a strong community.”



The Madawaska Valley Current provides balanced and stimulating local coverage of community growth, current affairs and cultural matters in the area. *The Current* is your year-round online community news source, with limited print distribution available monthly at selected local outlets. We want to keep *The Current* free and free-flowing. You can visit www.madvalleycurrent.com and download this month's issue to print copies for your friends and family.

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The Combermere Karate Club: a cautionary tale

YVETTE BOUDREAU-SMITH
COMBERMERE

Twenty-five students gather every Tuesday in the Combermere Recreation Center to earn their certified Karate belts. They all belong to the Combermere Karate Club, a registered member of the Canadian Jiu Jitsu Council (CJC). The club has been a source of inspiration and an outlet for children and youth for over twelve years.

Operated by a group of dedicated volunteers who see the value in teaching kids self-confidence, discipline and working to achieve goals, the Karate Club is centered on an individual sport. Still, the kids work in groups which also teaches them patience and respect for others, not to mention having fun!

"I like karate for a lot of reasons. There is not a lot to do around here for kids. I get to meet new friends. I'm learning new skills and I really enjoy it," says Stephanie Goodyear, age 11.

Recently, the club faced a new challenge that threatened its existence. Though it will survive due to the dedication of member families and the tenacity of Christine Darbyson, it's a cautionary tale.

For the last two years this club has operated with the help of the Combermere Recreation Committee, a committee of council for the Township of Madawaska Valley. Recent events, however, have challenged the club's ability to continue to operate. In the fall of 2017, members of the Combermere and Area Recreation Committee (as it is now known) called a meeting to gather new volunteers and recruit some more help.

But several individuals who showed up had an agenda of their own, which resulted in the formation of a new committee. And during a meeting in December, 2017, this newly-formed committee decided to cancel Karate and Tai Chi classes without the current Karate Club member being present.

Rather than offer conjecture as to why anyone would want to eliminate



Instructor John Artymko coaches Karate Club members. PHOTO: MARK SMITH

such an enjoyable and positive activity, the Karate Club is determined to survive and so is undergoing a reorganization to allow it to continue. The club decided it will no longer depend on the Combermere and Area Recreation Committee for their administration.

John Artymko (blue belt), Ken Seafield (black belt) and Maureen Lepinskie (blue belt) will be teaching the students, with occasional valued assistance from Sensei Bob van Balen Walter, one of the founding club members.

"Families love the way the club is run and see the benefits to their children and support the continuation of karate instruction, thanks to the efforts of people like Christine Darbyson. Sensei Bob is able to join us monthly to check on student progress, and help plan and organize curriculum. With Sensei's presence, belts can be presented to those students who earn them. I must also recognize the phenomenal parent support; without it there would be no club," says John Artymko.

These instructors volunteer their time to work with the students on a weekly basis so the students can earn their belts. The instructors will also continue to run the classes at the Combermere Community Center where it is set up for them, complete with their wall-to-wall mirrors that allow the students to train properly. In the fall, the club will be looking for new members and will endeavour to create a campaign that will bring awareness of the club and all it has to offer.

"All the students, families and volunteers are very pleased that we will still be offering karate at the Combermere Community Center," says Christine Darbyson. "There is a long history that we have to hold onto and ongoing achievements of the students that are so worthwhile in so many ways. Also having the Lions Club and the Friendship Club at the Community Center has added life to the place and we are very grateful that we will share the space with them."

House of Cards has nothing on Ontario provincial politics



JAMES DI FIORE
KILLALOE

Here's the breakdown as to why you should be helplessly enthralled with what's taking place inside the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

First, Patrick Brown was levelled with sexual misconduct allegations by two anonymous women. He resigned after his staff abandoned him. Things looked bleak, until it was discovered that one of the reporters who broke the story had a personal relationship with one of the anonymous accusers. Then, one of the accusers changed her story after it was proven that her account of what happened was impossible.

Are you still following? Good.

Since her story has changed, new information has emerged regarding the way CTV News handled the story. They left out witnesses who refuted the accusers from their original report. They even left out a startling detail; the accuser's friend who she said accompanied her to Brown's house had no recollection of ever being there, and says he has never seen the accuser with Brown. CTV padded their reporting, and they were caught.

Oh, by the way—CTV stands by its reporting.

Still with me? Fantastic.

So, Brown finally appeared on Global in a two-part interview to proclaim his innocence. He also said he believed this was the work of his political enemies, although he did not specifically name anyone. Since the interview, he also announced that he is back in the leadership race... and on the same day the PC interim leader kicked Brown out of caucus. Oh, and then the *Toronto Star* released a tape recording of Brown appearing to tell members of his team that he was resigning, although the clip is only a partial one, and so the context is unclear. For all anyone knows he was



Soap opera-like political saga taking place at Queens Park. PHOTO: WIKIMEDIACOMMONS.ORG

just laying out his options.

One thing is crystal clear—this is the strangest political saga we have ever witnessed in Canada, a sort of *House of Cards* for Ontarians who haven't had a scandal to sink their teeth into since Mayor Rob Ford was alive, in a leadership race that includes Rob's brother, Doug, and former prime minister Brian Mulroney's daughter, Caroline, as well as the widower of the late former finance minister Jim Flaherty, Christine Elliott.

Are you fully caught up yet? Probably not, given the pace of this story. While I'm typing this there have no doubt been another revelation or two. Perhaps another accuser may materialize, or maybe another prominent PC member will face their own sexual misconduct allegations.

One thing this story has spotlighted above all other facets is the notion that good journalism is suffering. CTV's reporting was incomplete, but they nevertheless went forward with breaking the story and took down a prominent politician in the process. By withholding witnesses, not disclosing personal connections between reporters and subjects, and using hearsay to prop up the original story, CTV has embodied

the #FakeNews hysteria many people have gravitated towards over the past couple years.

And other mainstream outlets have been no better. The *Toronto Star's* exclusive recording of Brown telling aides he was resigning was a legit story, but they did not know the context and they did not publish the phone call in its entirety so that there were no unanswered questions.

The #MeToo movement is an important cultural shift for North America. For too long, women have been subjected to abhorrent behavior by men in power and a change in our culture is long overdue. But if allegations against powerful men have now been weaponized, the movement itself will be the greatest casualty. Brown believes his political enemies are to blame for what he calls "lies," a startling claim that he will have to prove one way or the other.

At any rate, we are nowhere near the end of this soap opera-like political saga. Stay tuned.

Editor's note: James di Fiore's op-ed piece relates the twists and turns of the Patrick Brown story at time of going to press. Further details and video clips available online at www.madvalleycurrent.com

Neighbouring township explores economic and tourism development



ANYA GANSTERER
MADAWASKA

Local businesses and residents gathered at M&L Hall in Madawaska on February 9, for a meeting entitled Economic and Tourism Development. It was the second of two sessions for South Algonquin Township facilitated by Chris Fullerton, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Geography and Tourism Studies at Brock University and his students, Sam Olson, Taran Lennard and Cam Rolz.

In her introduction, Mayor Jane Dumas said that for several years South Algonquin has collaborated with Brock University on various projects to encourage community growth. South Algonquin Councillors Joe Florent, Richard Shalla and Sandra Collins joined in the discussion with the community participants.

Fullerton said South Algonquin recently adopted a community-led strategic plan that identified certain key goals and one of the priorities was economic development. To stimulate discussion about this priority, Rolz presented an analysis of the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The group of approximately two dozen people discussed the current tourism assets in the area. Some of

them referred to the significant competitive impact of the areas west of Algonquin Park such as Muskoka. This influence is experienced to some extent in the Madawaska Valley. However, while MV is part of the Ottawa Valley tourism region, South Algonquin is officially linked with Algonquin Park in the tourism region located beyond the West Gate.

Other participants noted that South Algonquin Township also faces a challenge because of its distance from the seat of Nipissing District, North Bay. This is another challenge that Madawaska Valley can relate to, as MV is the municipality farthest away from Pembroke in Renfrew County.

The two municipalities also have more in common. They share a rich history dating back thousands of years to the ancestors of the Algonquin peoples and more recently to the story of the lumber camps and the railway that linked Ottawa to Parry Sound. Although the trains are gone, JR Booth's legacy is still in full force connecting our villages via recreational trails which were once the railway tracks.

Over the past few years the Township of Madawaska Valley has invested in the development of a recreational geology tour guide which includes sites in both townships and a permanent

exhibit in the Railway Station. More sites in both townships were identified as suitable for potential development. The Madawaska River, which attracts thousands of paddlers each year, is another asset shared by South Algonquin and Madawaska Valley.

While cross-border collaboration was not specifically on the agenda that afternoon, it seemed clear that there is a lot of potential for further mutual support and collaboration between the two townships—at least in terms of tourism and community growth.

The Brock University team also asked for feedback from participants about an ecomuseum concept. Fullerton said an ecomuseum is not a single building, but rather a community-wide approach to conserving and preserving local heritage. He described a Canadian example at Kalyna Country in Saskatchewan.

Embracing our shared heritage and geographical landscape as a springboard for tourism development may well provide a joint boost to economic development.

Chris Fullerton, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Geography and Tourism Studies at Brock University and his students, Sam Olson, Taran Lennard and Cam Rolz facilitate the discussion.

Monarch magic

DANIELLE PAUL
MADAWASKA VALLEY

Carol Peterson, a Madawaska resident, gave an informative and entertaining presentation about monarch butterflies to members of the Madawaska Valley Horticultural Society on February 15, 2018. Peterson's interest in butterflies began during childhood but metamorphosed into a full-fledged passion during her teaching career when she joined the Monarch Teacher Network.

As a trained monarch enthusiast, she introduced a butterfly garden and monarch study program to her Grade 4 class in Brighton, Ontario. Now retired from teaching, she continues to advocate on behalf of monarchs and all butterflies from her home at McCauley Lake.

Peterson's students learned that monarch butterflies from Ontario take only one month to migrate a distance of 4,000 km to the mountains of Mexico. Whenever a monarch butterfly would emerge from its chrysalis in the classroom, the excited children would break into a chant: "Gotta go ... Gotta go ... Gotta go to Mexico."

In 2009, Peterson was one of only two Canadian teachers on a Monarch Teachers Network tour to the monarch wintering grounds in Michoacan, Mexico. She showed slides from that trip during her talk to MV Horticultural Society, which she called *The Magic of the monarch: a story of migration, milkweed and metamorphosis*. Peterson presented fascinating facts about monarchs at all stages of their development, saying that swarms of monarchs are surprisingly noisy in flight and described the sound of their wings as a "crisp clipping."

She said that monarchs fly up to 80 km per day at speeds ranging from 15 to 50 kph. In order to reach Mexico, they take advantage of thermals and fly as high as 2,000 m. She said no one has yet answered in full the question of how they know where to go, explaining that in the spring we see the "return" of the great-great-grandchildren of the



Carol Peterson with tulle-covered butterfly larva "tower."

monarchs who migrated from Ontario to Mexico the previous fall.

In all species there are population cycles but 50 percent of the monarch population was lost between 2012 and 2014. While those dramatic declines have slowed somewhat, Peterson says her interest in teaching people about monarch butterflies remains urgent because in 2016 the monarch butterfly was officially designated an Endangered Species.

She said the food source for monarchs is the milkweed plant. She handed out packets of milkweed seeds to the audience and gave tips on how MV gardeners can protect and encourage monarch butterflies:

- Avoid use of chemical fertilizers.
- Encourage growth of milkweed plants. Adult monarchs lay their eggs under milkweed leaves as it is the only food that the monarch larva eats.
- To introduce milkweed to your garden, Peterson says it is easier and

more successful to transplant an entire milkweed plant (including the rhizome below the tap root) than to germinate seeds indoors.

- Cultivate other butterfly-friendly plants.
- Provide bird baths and boulders.

Peterson has passed on her infectious love for these beautiful creatures to people of all ages. Her nieces picked up the butterfly bug from her when they spent the summer of 2009 at McCauley Lake. Madawaska Valley Horticultural Society members were charmed by an engaging YouTube video the girls wrote and produced about their summer of monarch butterflies entitled *Butterfly Story*.

The Madawaska Valley Horticultural Society meets on the third Thursday of each month at the Opeongo Senior Centre in Barry's Bay. On March 15, Robbie Anderman will talk about his recently-published book *The Healing Trees: The Edible & Herbal Qualities of Northern Woodland Trees*.

What are we going to do with it?

MARILYN HAINES
MADAWASKA VALLEY

When talking to Stanley (Sam) Dombroskie at the Bark Lake landfill about eventually having more recycling depot bins for different products, he asked, “What are we going to do with it?”

It’s a good question. Even though our approach and efforts to recycling are good, it seems impossible to keep up.

Part of the answer could be Bill 151, new legislation that sets out a strategy for a Waste Free Ontario and will put Ontario in a leadership role on waste reduction. Actions of the strategy aim to create a circular economy, which will keep the resources used on that product within the economy by using it again to create future value.

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change is putting pressure on manufacturers, importers, wholesalers, retailers and e-tailers to improve the design of their materials, products and business practices to keep the value of the resources used and maintained for as long as possible.

General Manager of the Ottawa Valley Waste Recovery Centre (OVWRC.com), Sue McCrae states, “As part of the act, municipalities will no longer be responsible to collect and pay for the recycling of packaging (The Blue Box Program). The costs to manage packaging will be borne by the product manufacturers, which are the ones that actually choose which packaging they market their products in. Likewise as these producers take on the full management costs, they will also assume responsibility for the collection and processing system which is now managed by municipal or regional governments.”

We hope to see many necessary changes as a result of this new legislation. The Circular Economy Act should reduce waste sent to landfill by encouraging reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery of packaging materials. Targets for recovery (recycling) of valuable resources used in packaging for the goods sold into the marketplace in Ontario will be set and monitored by the newly formed Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority who are now



Wilno recycling bins. PHOTO: SHARON GARDINER

tasked with policing producers of packaging to ensure they meet recycling targets set by the Ministry.

In the Madawaska Valley, our recycling lately has been pretty good says McCrae. The OVWRC randomly audits our bins that come in for recycling.

They sort representative samples of the container material received for recycling, weigh it and hand sort through it to determine the percentage contamination and identify which materials have been included in error. This establishes the residue rate (percentage). The aim is to have less than 10 percent says McCrae.

Madawaska Valley has been very good on the last two audits—7.9 percent in January, 2018 and 4.6 percent in October, 2017. However, we were high during the previous two audits (12.6 percent in April, 2017, 13.8 percent in February, 2017).

On how we can improve on our residue rate, McCrae advises us to

“Keep an eye on the types of plastic we include for recycling. For example, film plastics (plastic bags of all kinds) and Styrofoam are no longer acceptable in our program as there are no longer stable markets to ensure these materials can be recycled. Likewise wrappers for hot dogs, meat, chip bags,

candy wrappers, non-packaging plastics such as laundry baskets, toys and many more items are not recyclable and should be included in your garbage waste. If there is any confusion as to what is recyclable residents should check the Township and OVWRC websites before including items in with their recycling. Remember recyclables are hand sorted and when non-recyclable items are included in error it drives up the program costs which at this time are paid for through your tax dollars.”

Individually we’re making necessary changes to reduce our footprint by participating in our local recycling programs. The new legislation (Bill 151) should drive an increase in waste diversion and encourage new recycling end markets. Transferring the costs for recycling away from the taxpayer and onto the producers should provide the financial incentive the producers need to make better environmental decisions on how to package their products.

The Waste Free Ontario Act, Bill 151, sets out a plan to reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions. Recycling, green procurement, disposal bans for landfill, increased organics diversion and so much more. It’s going to help us with some answers to Sam’s question, what are we going to do with it.

Why heat with wood?

SAVING MONEY IS PART OF IT, BUT THERE IS MUCH MORE TO LIKE ABOUT A WOOD FIRE



The author with his fire wood 'kit.' PHOTO: WENDY MILNE

JOHN GULLAND
MADAWASKA VALLEY

Because it is February, you might be getting fed up lugging firewood around and feeding a wood heater's endless appetite for fuel. Sure, we save some money each year by not having to buy electricity, oil or propane for home heating. But there must be something more causing us to put in all this labour. Having earned my living as a wood heat specialist for most of my working life, I have given this matter some careful thought and have come up with some reasons.

In a world of touch-screen convenience, pocket-sized computers, and automatic climate-controlled environments, wood heating is in every way rough, basic and steadfastly hands-on. People who heat with wood seem out of step with the modern world swirling around them. Have wood burners and those who labour to supply them with fuel slipped through a crack in the cozy consensus of modernity? Or are they onto something meaningful that has been missed by the mainstream?

The producers and consumers of fuelwood are engaged in an activity that

reduces net greenhouse gas emissions while others merely fret about global warming. The fuelwood fraternity use a renewable energy resource, taking pressure off dwindling supplies of ever-pricier and scarce fossil fuels. Buyers of fuelwood create jobs close to home and strengthen their local communities. They know more about the cause-and-

effect relationships of energy production and consumption than economists who promote tar sands development.

Heating with wood is about a lot more than home heating. It is a tangible expression of self-reliance, of the courage to buck the trends and to resist the appeal of sedentary, push-button convenience. Heat- — *Continued on next page.*



A view through the glass door of an efficient wood stove. PHOTO: JOHN GULLAND

Why heat with wood?, *Continued from previous page—*

ing with wood reinforces links to the land and is a willing submission to the cycle of the seasons. It provides stability and security in a turbulent world.

To its owner, the woodlot is a living community in constant evolution, while to the urban observer it may be seen as a museum in which the removal of a tree exhibit renders it diminished. The woodlot owner watches its quality improve over the years, even as it yields products and creates employment. The owner's household earns part of its income by being a fuel supplier to the neighbours. It is a gentle way to produce energy compared to open pit uranium mines and oil and gas fracking operations.

Fuelwood is the ultimate populist energy resource, the most easily accessed and affordable of all renewable energies. The major environmental impact of wood heating is visible for all to see in the form of smoke emissions, making everyone who uses it instantly accountable for their actions. The families that heat with wood and those that supply them with fuel do so privately, without fanfare or acknowledgement. Heating with wood is its own reward.

The low profile of wood heating in energy policy discussions and in the media reflects the fact that policy—even rural policy—is developed in big cities, and that the large media outlets are all urban in location and outlook. That and the fact that no large corporations are involved in wood heating and therefore no high-priced lobbyists or special interest groups prowl the halls of legislatures pleading the case of wood burning.

So, despite the fact that plenty of families burn wood at home, its role as an energy source rarely appears on government and media radar. Many of us are happy to see it stay that way.

A real wood fire satisfies like no imitation can. Each fire is unique, following its random path from lit kindling to dramatic flames to red coals. The soft glow of the fire creates a memorable setting for intimate conversation. It's the place where family and friends gather. Gazing into the fire in a quiet moment, your imagination is free to soar on flights of fancy or probe the depths of the soul.

A wood burning stove or heating fireplace bathes the room with a rich,

soothing warmth that no other energy source can equal. The fire's radiance offers a welcome embrace as you come in from the cold. With its all-natural ingredients, a wood fire is a hearty tonic for winter chill.

When you warm your life with wood, you participate in a natural cycle and an

ancient human ritual. The simple act of stirring coals and placing a log on the fire is one we share with ancestors who lived at the dawn of human history.

Burning wood for warmth is still satisfying. True, it takes a little extra effort, but like tending a garden or home cooking a meal, you are always rewarded.



Barry's Bay Island Farm Island. PHOTO SUBMITTED BY BOB CORRIGAN

VALLEY HERITAGE

Madawaska Valley island farm

BOB CORRIGAN
BARRY'S BAY

The picture is a view of the island farm from a postcard. On the back, it says "Published by Alex Wilson Publications Ltd., Dryden, Ontario" and "Sponsored by the Madawaska Valley Tourist Association." The photograph was taken from halfway up the hill on Biernacki Mountain Road. That hill was nicknamed Windy City. It is even said to be free from mosquitoes because of a constant breeze.

Below the branch of the oak tree, in the distance, is Mask Island. In the early days, it was called Welshman's Island, named after Edward and Mary Williams from Wales who were in this area at the time of both the 1861 and the 1871 census.

In the distance beyond Mask Island, at the far left, you can make out St. Hedwig's Church. The causeway leading to the island is visible. Note there are not many buildings on the island. The postmark on the postcard was dated 1963.

NOTE: Have your photo and story featured in The Madawaska Valley Current. Send information to local historian Bob Corrigan at The Current (marked Heritage Photo). Email madvalleycurrent@gmail.com. Mail photos to The Current, Box 1097, Barry's Bay K0J 1B0. Originals will be returned.