

## MV Council to adopt new governance structure

DANIELLE PAUL  
MADAWASKA VALLEY

The Township of Madawaska Valley held the inaugural meeting of its new Council on December 3, 2018. CAO/ Clerk Suzanne Klatt opened the meeting and presided over the Invocation as Mayor Kim Love and each member of Council in turn swore the oath of office, signed the confirming documents and shook hands with CAO Klatt.

In her address, Mayor Love pointed out that the new Council collectively brought over 48 years of council experience to the table and expressed enthusiasm about working with them in the best interests of the community.

The meeting was attended by the partners or spouses of all members of Council, and by numerous members of Township staff. After the Invocation of the new Council, a break was called so that all present could mingle and enjoy some cake.

The new Council directed CAO Klatt to amend the relevant by-laws to create a Committee of the Whole structure



From left: Carl Bromwich, Mark Willmer, Kim Love, David Shulist, Ernie Peplinski.

to take effect at the Council meeting of January 8, 2019.

Council will hold a closed Special Council meeting at 9 a.m. on December 11 for training purposes pertaining to the Code of Conduct and Procedural By-Law review. CAO Klatt said, "Finan-

cial implications of Committee of the Whole will result in cost savings. It will not require separate agendas or meeting dates for each... committee to report to Council and changing the meeting day and time will save on overtime costs and bring efficiencies to the table."

## Bosco students take proposals to MV Council

THE CURRENT  
MADAWASKA VALLEY

Grade 7 and 8 Geography students from St. John Bosco School attended Madawaska Valley Council to witness municipal government in action on November 19.

Their teacher, Ms. Jordan Norris, explained their class project was to identify landuse groups in the Village of Barry's Bay. Each student analysed what issues existed in a landuse group and wrote a proposal to MV Council suggesting ways to address the issues.

They invited members of Council

to meet with them at the school to discuss their letters and Councillors Elser Lee Archer and Carl Bromwich visited the students on October 26.

The young people's obvious concern about what makes a community livable impressed the Councillors who promised to include their suggestions at the Nov. 19 Council meeting. The eighteen letters included these concerns:

- removing goose feces at the public beach
- improving recreational facilities and trails
- introducing public transport
- conserving wildlife habitat

- encouraging a better mix of commercial enterprises.



St. John Bosco students in MV council chambers. PHOTOS: APRIL LUNDY, BETHANY KLUKE



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## PORCH VIEWS

# Island of dreams



MARK WOERMKE  
BARRY'S BAY

The largest island in Lake Kamaniskeg has had many owners and several names, but for this edition of Porch Views, I would like to call it "Island of Dreams."

This jewel in Lake Kamaniskeg was first identified on maps as "Welshman's Island" in 1873 named after its first owner, Edward Williams. Artifacts and graves found over the years indicate that before that, the Algonquins knew the island well and would have had an Anishinaabe name for it when they controlled the area. After Williams, it changed hands five more times before it was purchased by Paul B. Mask in 1917. Since that date it has been officially known as Mask Island, although many residents of the area simply refer to it as "the Island."

Owners included Arthur Acton who immigrated with John S.J. Watson who founded Rockingham, William Dunn after whose family Barry's Bay's Dunn Street is named and John Billings my great grandfather who owned it only for four years. His dream was to supply his hotel and livery stable with food and hay, but that turned out to be "too god-damned much work" and he sold it in 1913.

Paul and Mary Ann Mask (née Bier-nacki) purchased the Island in late 1917 and, although lots have been sold over the years, the Mask family has maintained a working farm on it for over a century. While we can't know exactly what their dreams were, the fact that Paul sold a successful sash and door factory in Killaloe to buy this property suggests they considered it a step-up. Close to Mary Ann's parents, a burgeoning village and railway station, it was an excellent place to raise a family and establish a market farm. The Masks raised nine children, farmed successfully, built a floating bridge and found time to serve their church and municipality.

In 1938 Paul founded the Island Dairy. Today the family farm is managed by Paul and Mary Ann's grandson, Ray, and his sons, Scott and Derek.

It seems that the recipe for successful island living is one part vision and many parts hard work, and the fourth generation are not strangers to either. I learned this on a recent visit to the Island hosted by Scott Mask and his partner Ollie Scherer.

Right now Scott and Ollie are weekend farmers living an urban-rural lifestyle. Both men work in the city and acknowledge that their lifestyle has its challenges, but Ollie is clear: "We have found a happy balance between employment in the city and our rural lifestyle."

Scott adds, "We need the jobs, but life is definitely better up here."

The couple plans to gradually build their farm business and make it sustainable for them.

In the meantime, they meet the challenges with hard work and good humour which was evident in their stories like the one about purchasing a goat in Hamilton and transporting it to the Farm. Scott drove the truck while Ollie held the kid in the backseat with their four Yorkshire Terriers. Scott adds, "That was a day trip. We dropped the goat off, and headed back to the city."

In addition to their goat, they have cows (Clarabelle and her calf) and a number of guinea fowl, peacocks and exotic hens.

An important part of their project is the production of wildflower honey and beeswax candles. Ollie is the beekeeper and an unlikely one at that. Moved by reports of bee deaths, Ollie responded to this environmental crisis by overcoming his long standing bee-phobia. He jokes, "I have been stung a lot, but looking after the bees has desensitized me."

They have seven hives right now. Ollie cares for the bees and takes care of the honey extraction and bottling, while Scott looks after the marketing, logo design and sales. Their honey is available at Herron's store in Barry's Bay, at The Old Country Shop on





Clockwise from top left: Scott Mask and Ollie Scherer are building dreams on Mask Island. Scott Mask points to inscription made by his great grandfather in the barn's concrete foundation. A view of Mask Island Farm. PHOTOS: MARK WOERMKE

Roncesvalles in Toronto and on their website [maskislandfarm.ca](http://maskislandfarm.ca). Scott also makes the natural and scented beeswax candles that they distribute through their website.

An additional challenge that the couple faces is that their trailer is on a part of the Island that does not have electricity. Scott explains, "We are definitely low-tech and live off the grid. When necessary, we have a generator."

Challenges like these do not keep them from thinking big. They would like to continue producing honey and dream about running an educational, interactive farm, offering a rustic wedding venue, and maybe even obtaining a dairy quota.

Ollie, who has a background in economic development, explains their approach: "We want to modernize without too much automation so we can create jobs, growth and provide opportunities for youth."

Scott adds, "Most of my classmates have left for the city and only come back to visit occasionally. We want to make our life here – the area has lots of potential – but we have to find a way to keep people from running away."

Scott, who attended MVDHS, worked at Valu-Mart and on construction,

"packed up his stuff and moved to T.O." to go to school and find work, but the Island was in his blood. That heritage, a supportive partner and an accepting family has enabled him to return to his home. He encourages others who wish to remain in, or return to the Valley, to follow their dreams. All they need is vision, hard work and the ability to "think outside the box."

For now, these weekend farmers will continue to divide their time between the city and the Island, but, as Scott points out "thinking all week of coming home to "God's Country" makes it worthwhile. With a smile he adds, "I wonder what my grandpa who died in 1998 would think of all of this? We are so blessed to have this land."

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# The food bank needs your help this winter

THE CURRENT  
MADAWASKA VALLEY

Madawaska Valley Food Bank is looking for help to ensure its clients don't go hungry this winter. Food Bank volunteers told The Current about the generosity of Valley residents during the lead-up to the holidays.

The Madawaska Valley Horticultural Society held its annual potluck dinner to which Society members were invited to bring donations of non-perishable food items. This time the gardeners donated fourteen grocery bags of food and a record \$405 in cash. Tish Whitfield of MV Food Bank said, "This re-

cord donation is much appreciated and is very timely, coming just before Christmas, our busiest time of the year. This kind of support from the community is what allows us to help so many people in need."

Norine Helferty presented \$442 to Tish Whitfield, President of the MV Food Bank, from the Combermere Bridge Club, which has just disbanded. Norine and her sister Rita Murray had originally started the club.

Valley residents shopping at Barry's Bay Metro can participate in its annual in-store holiday campaign. This has been a long-running success, selling pre-packed bags of non-perishables for people to place into the MV Food Bank donation bin at the north entrance to the store. It's an easy and convenient way for shoppers to make a difference.

Moose FM hosted its fourth annual Radiothon on December 6. In just a few years this has become the major fundraiser for MV Food Bank, bringing in several thousand dollars annually. Food Bank volunteer Terry Newcombe said, "It's our best opportunity to educate all the people and businesses in our community about what we do, where we do it, how we do it, and why it is so helpful to the overall health of where we all choose to live. We do this through the interviews that Moose FM has with us throughout the event, so needless to say big kudos go out to Moose FM for all their assistance."

Last year was MV Food Bank's best radiothon thanks to some major donations from Tim Horton's, the local Lions Clubs, the United Steelworkers Union at Pastway, and an anonymous donor. Newcombe said another way Moose FM helps with the radiothon is by offering one-hour sponsorships to local businesses throughout the radiothon for just \$250. This means the business is advertised twice on-air, and Moose FM donates all the proceeds right back to the MV Food Bank.

The Student Activities Council of Madawaska Valley District High School and Sherwood School organized a turkey dinner at MVDHS on December 7 to benefit the Food Bank – a great way to feed the family before the annual Tree of Lights and Midnight Madness in Barry's Bay.

Stock still he stands  
a crimson icon  
of this parallel  
breathing short shallow  
eyes darting through  
the shadowed drifting.  
Of being still too long  
in the raw air of trees coated  
in this year's first lace.  
Stock still  
with ominous ears perked  
looking finger  
poised and moist.  
Thoughts of a clean shot  
an anticipated primal  
excitement at  
proving one's skill  
of gutting bloodied clothing.

Of sitting at the Hotel  
with friends  
in a red room  
necks straining to hear  
the very detail.  
Gun poised solid  
absolute power frozen in the November air  
crooked waiting.  
Strained stiff expectation  
in a movement  
moment of quadrupeds.  
Thinking of the freezer  
thinking of stories  
prodded late in January  
to heights of bloody satisfaction  
over beer and pickled egg  
a legend in every bite  
the cold details numbing even the very tip of his  
maleness  
he stands stock still.

By: lhd/15/11/1990

## Hunter

PHOTO: HARRISON HAINES



Terry Newcombe with some of the items donated at this year's potluck dinner. PHOTO: NOLA LEROUX

# Novels for the book lover on your Christmas list

DOREEN YAKABUSKI  
CORNWALL

As an avid reader, I'd love if Canadians adopted the Icelandic tradition of Jólabókaflóð (Yule Book Flood). On Christmas Eve, Icelanders exchange gifts of books and then spend the evening reading. This custom sounds like heaven to me because my wish list for Santa always includes books. If you have a reader on your Christmas list, here are six novels to consider for gifts. All titles were published in 2018.

*Women Talking*, by Miriam Toews: Women in an ultraconservative Menonite colony gather after several of their men have been arrested for sexual assault. The men will return to the community in two days so the women have a short time to decide how to move forward: do nothing, stay and fight, or leave. As the women debate, they touch on subjects like faith, forgiveness, and love. Heated exchanges are interspersed with humour. This novel invites discussion so would be great for someone in a book club.

*The Boat People*, by Sharon Bala: This book is narrated from three perspectives. Mahindan, a Tamil, arrives in Vancouver aboard a cargo ship, seeking asylum for himself and his son. Priya, a second-generation Sri-Lankan-Canadian, is an articling student helping Mahindan's immigration lawyer. Grace, a third-generation Japanese-Canadian, adjudicates refugee cases and will determine Mahindan's ultimate fate. This novel received short shrift on Canada Reads but deserves to be read as it examines the complex situation in which refugees find themselves.

*Up From Freedom*, by Wayne Grady: Virgil Moody vowed he would never own slaves though he takes Annie, a house slave, with him when he leaves his father's plantation. Moody considers Annie and her son Lucas his family. When Lucas falls in love with a slave girl and flees with her, Virgil sets out to find them. In its examination of the concept of freedom, this book is a nice companion to another good book: *Washington Black*, the Giller Prize-winner by Esi Edugyan.

*Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine*, by Gail Honeyman: During the week El-

eanor Oliphant works as an accounting clerk; on weekends, she drinks vodka and speaks to no one. She is a misfit with little knowledge of social conventions, but an act of kindness slowly draws her into the wider world. Eleanor has a sad life but there is considerable humour in her observations about the world, and the reader cannot but love Eleanor and cheer for her as she steps outside her comfort zone.

*Unsheltered*, by Barbara Kingsolver: Two families live in the same area, 150

years apart, in times when old beliefs are being challenged. In 1870, a teacher puts his job at risk and his family in financial peril by teaching the theory of evolution. In 2016, a family finds their dreams of success and financial stability unfulfilled while "The Bullhorn" campaigns to be the next President. The book combines rich storytelling and social commentary.

Complete reviews of all these books can be found at [schatjesshelves.blogspot.com](http://schatjesshelves.blogspot.com). Happy Reading!

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**The Madawaska Valley Current**  
PO Box 1097, Barry's Bay ON, K0J 1B0  
T: 613.639.1524  
E: [madvalleycurrent@gmail.com](mailto:madvalleycurrent@gmail.com)  
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# County unveils new mental health initiative

ROGER PAUL  
RENFREW

At the Annual General Meeting of the Renfrew County Law Clinic held in Pembroke on October 30 2018 members heard a presentation by Greg Lubimiv about the new Renfrew County Mental Health and Addiction Plan. Lubimiv is Executive Director of the Phoenix Centre for Children and Families which is the lead agency for the provincial initiative, Moving on Mental Health. He is also the chair of the Renfrew County Mental Health and Addiction Planning Table.

The plan, which is the first county-wide initiative and which was released this past summer, evolved from a Planning Table which commenced its work in 2015. Its goal was to create a more client-centred, effective and efficient system, which would help anyone experiencing a mental health challenge

get to the right door to receive the right treatment at the right time. Renfrew County is only one of two regions which focused on all ages rather than just those under 18.

One of its goals is to have all agencies/organizations adopt the principle of “connecting everyone to the right door.” Lubimiv described how there have been many examples of those needing access to mental health services but just do not know where to go or even if they connect to the wrong service are only provided a phone number or a list of other services. Agencies will be charged with the responsibility of staying with a client until they get to the right door.

Recommendations in the plan fall into three categories:

- Intake/access which addresses concerns about not knowing where to go, not having quick access, issues about sharing information between

service providers, having a wide assortment of intake instruments, and clients having to tell their stories over and over.

- Pathways to care which focuses on creating formal protocols that assist in case coordination or case management between agencies.
- Integrated crisis systems which will build on an already clear model that has emerged and work in this area will help to eliminate clients falling through the cracks and in having a common protocol between emergency rooms in hospitals and community agencies.

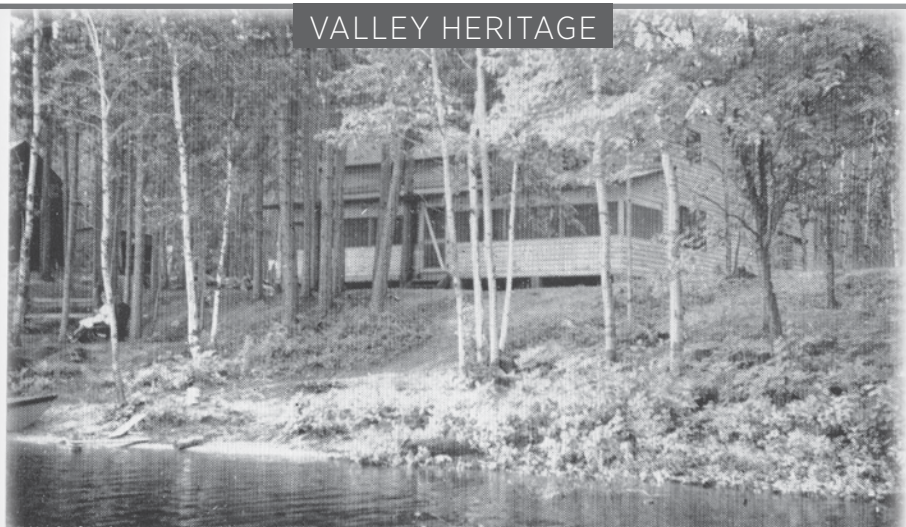
Some of the statistics that Lubimiv referred to highlight the need for addressing the priorities identified. It is estimated that 20 percent of children and youth in Ontario are affected by a mental illness or disorder. Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among 10 to 24 year olds and in Canada only one in four children who need mental health services receives them. At the meeting Lubimiv noted, “You should also know that youth and adults and seniors are in the same position. Up to one in five of all ages will suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder in their lifetime.”

Lubimiv also highlighted the challenges created by being physically remote from services. “You are not too bad off if you live in Pembroke or Petawawa or Renfrew or Arnprior, but God forbid if you live in Combermere or Douglas.”

The issue of access for more rural/remote areas and exploring innovative strategies will be one that is addressed by the Phoenix Centre and the Planning Table in the coming year.

In the Phoenix Centre media release announcing the Plan, Lubimiv said, “Mental health and addiction services are going to go through some major transitions over the next few years and this is very much due to the amazing people around the Planning Table who have put huge amounts of time and effort into creating a plan that will make a difference. We are also thankful to the Ministry of Children and Youth for their vision of system transformation and the provision of resources.”

## VALLEY HERITAGE



Moll's Lodge, Wadsworth Lake, Barry's Bay, Ont. (48-8)

BOB CORRIGAN  
BARRY'S BAY

Here's a postcard that was postmarked June or July 12, 1948. It's a picture of Moll's Lodge which was located on Wadsworth Lake. I have actually been there but I no longer remember where on the lake it is. I don't think that it's standing any more. I think it was operated by the Owens family from Ohio.

The message informs the recipient

that not very many fish have been caught. However, someone in the group caught a 'nice bass' and another person a pike. If anyone knows anything further about Moll's Lodge, please let us know.

*NOTE: If you are interested in having a picture and story featured in The Madawaska Valley Current, please submit the information to Bob Corrigan at The Current, PO Box 1097, Barry's Bay K0J 1B0 (marked Heritage Photos). Originals will be returned.*

# A memorable November 11

JOANNE OLSEN  
MADAWASKA VALLEY

On Sunday, November 11, 2018 at 3:00 p.m., close to 100 members of the community attended the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 406 in Barry's Bay and left 90 minutes later having experienced the very personal and private side of war. The Opeongo Readers' Theatre (ORT), under the capable direction of Barry Conway, presented readings of actual letters from local Madawaska Valley soldiers serving on the front line during World War II.

The letters, received and kept by World War I veteran Tom Skuce, had been discovered only recently by his grandchildren, Holly and Doug, and then shared with Branch 406. ORT members brought the contents of the letters to life, inviting the audience into the many emotions of soldiers missing the simple comforts of home and family.

Legion President, Heather Poliquin, explained the origin of the letters to the audience and described a little of what it was like to be a soldier 70 years ago. At the end of the performance, she encouraged community members to search family memorabilia for similar letters to and from soldiers of Canada's



Holly Skuce (left) leans on a wooden box full of soldiers' letters and postcards as she, Heather Poliquin and Doug Skuce examine other wartime memorabilia.

five defining wars. These could become the subject of future Remembrance Day activities.

Madawaska Valley Public Library and the Barry's Bay Legion are working together to benefit anybody interested in local history, veterans and literacy in general. They invite you to search for old letters, cards and memorabilia so we can remember those who served—as well as those

who waited for them. A list of local soldiers' names is available from the legion or the library.

The podcast of the presentation, Remember Me, is now available online at Opeongo Readers Theatre. Library staff can help you access the podcast on a phone or computer. A CD will also be available soon at a cost of \$9.95 from both the Library and the Legion.

*This article has been abridged for print.*



Left: Colour Guard from members of 2 Service Battalion, Royal Canadian Electrical Mechanical Engineers (RCEME) Training Company remained at Rest, Reverse on Your Arms at the Cenotaph during the morning's Remembrance Ceremony. Right: Edward Battiston plays the Last Post after Bells of Peace were rung 100 times on the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day.





From left: Eden Guidroz, Wendy Zakrzewski, Debbie Marshall, Elser Lee Faith Archer, Janet McCarthy, Ann Isbister, Jeneene Brunton, Don Isbister.

PHOTO: FRANCES MAWSON

## Communities in Bloom winter baskets

Communities in Bloom (CiB) volunteers filled Madawaska Valley Township Yard 2 garage with winter baskets on November 22. They scheduled just one morning to produce enough baskets not only for the downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA) catchment area in Barry's Bay but also for Railway Station Park and Zurkowski Park.

The CiB winter basket session is another example of the partnership formed by the BIA, CiB committee, Madawaska Valley Horticultural Society, Township of Madawaska Valley and individual community volunteers. Ted Williams of V&S Stedmans provided the lengths of red ribbon used by Cathy Stevenson of Valley Living to produce many of the oversized bows for the baskets. Township staff ensured the garage was warm enough for the volunteers to work without freezing their fingers. Staff later worked quickly to hang the baskets for Black Friday shoppers to enjoy.

BIA executive members Williamson and Neil O'Reilly (Barry's Bay Metro) arrived with cookies and fruit to help keep up the volunteers' energy as they worked to make 44 festive arrangements. This is the third year that the festive winter baskets in Barry's Bay have been produced by volunteers.

## Local interest in Green Burial

BERNADINE ROSLYN  
KILLALOE

Green Burial Ottawa Valley held an Information Session in Killaloe on Thursday, November 15. They are an informal group (at present) and are working to make Green Burial available to residents of the Ottawa Valley.

Green Burial is an environmentally sensitive option to standard burial practice or cremation. In Green Burial, the body is not embalmed and is buried directly in the earth. It could be contained in a bio-degradable wooden casket, or one made of woven material like a basket, or even just wrapped in a shroud; but there is no metal lining or concrete vault to keep the body away from the earth.

Burial is usually a little less deep than standard burial, so that the body is deep enough to be protected from animals, but exposed to microbes and insects in the soil and so decomposes naturally.

A Green Burial cemetery will usually resemble a park, with pathways wild plants, animal habitat, and even bee

hives. Graves might be marked by low stones, sourced locally, or there could be a communal memorial for all people buried there. In either case, there would be no standard upright stones on concrete foundations.

While Green Burial was common practice for thousands of years, since the American Civil War it has been increasingly replaced by embalming and standard burial practice.

In recent years, Green Burial has become more popular as an alternative to standard practice, which results in huge amounts of embalming fluid, wood, metal and concrete being buried each year. Cremation has been seen as an environmentally friendly alternative, but it consumes large amounts of energy and releases carbon into the atmosphere. Green Burial, on the other hand, simply allows the Earth to break down the body in a gentle and natural way.

Green Burial Ottawa Valley is presently working to establish a Green Burial site, and deal with the many issues that must be addressed before an actual cemetery can be set up.

### A GREENER WAY TO GO

From preparing bodies to burying them in natural settings, the green burial movement is attempting to make death more environmentally friendly and, in some ways, closer to the way it was in the past. A comparison:

#### STANDARD BURIAL

Burials use formaldehyde embalming and long-lasting caskets. They can easily cost \$10,000.

A standard grave site, often landscaped and well-maintained, features a large headstone made of granite or flat bronze. Fertilizer and pesticides are used on the grass.

Below ground, a casket made of steel, finished wood and copper rests inside a concrete vault capped by a thick concrete lid.

A green grave site is a natural setting, more closely resembling a forest floor.

#### NATURAL BURIAL

The natural, or green, burial method starts with the body preparation, which uses no embalming fluid or a nonformaldehyde-based formula. Green burials can cost less than \$2,000.

If there's a headstone, it's a rock or a piece of rough-cut limestone that's flat on one side to identify the deceased. Some methods use GPS coordinates to spot a grave's location.

Caskets are made of wood, plywood, bamboo, cardboard, cornstarch or wicker. Sometimes a shroud or quilt may be used to wrap the body.

Source: Nathan Butler

STEPHEN J. BEARD / The Star

GRAPHIC: STEPHEN J. BEARD, INDIANAPOLIS STAR



## EDITORIAL

# Have lessons been learned from Borutski's crimes?

DANIELLE PAUL  
MADAWASKA VALLEY

On November 20, 2018, the provincial government issued a media release entitled Ontario Working to Stop Violence Against Women and Support Survivors. It announced that it is investing \$11.5 million this year to better support frontline shelter workers serving women and children and delivering counselling programs across the province.

Minister Responsible for Women's Issues Lisa MacLeod said, "We want to make sure those affected by violence and exploitation receive the supports they need, while offenders are held accountable through the justice system."

Whereas increasing the quality of frontline support for women and children under threat is laudable, for residents of Renfrew County the memories of the murders of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam remain fresh. Before he committed his heinous crimes, Basil Borutski had already been "through the justice system," yet it failed to take appropriate steps that might have saved the lives of the three women.

During his trial it was revealed that Borutski had been convicted of assaulting and attempting to choke Kuzyk the year before she was killed. At the time of that assault he was on probation for offences against Warmerdam including threatening to kill her dog and harm her son.

A term of that probation required him to participate in a domestic violence response program but he never attended a single session. Leighann Burns, executive director of Harmony House, an Ottawa-based women's shelter, was reported as saying after the Borutski trial had finished that Borutski's potential for violence was clearly visible to everyone involved in those cases. She also asked whether the justice system did enough to contain that danger.

In response to these concerns, MPP John Yakabuski introduced (and re-introduced) a private member's bill aimed at ensuring that offenders like Borutski would obey the terms of their



probation and parole. It would also require those convicted of sexual violence to have an electronic monitoring system that would let authorities know where they are at any given time. His bill died on the vine when the Ontario legislature was dissolved in May 2018.

At the time, Yakabuski noted that he often hears from residents who want greater accountability placed on parolees so that their victims are safer: "It is unacceptable that a year has passed since Anastasia Kuzyk, Nathalie Warmerdam and Carol Culleton were taken from us, yet the government has not passed legislation to strengthen our parole system.

Government must take this matter seriously and acknowledge there are ways to provide greater protection to victims of violence—anything less is unacceptable."

Until some action such as Yakabuski's proposed bill is taken, ministerial pronouncements about the effectiveness of the justice system will continue to have a hollow ring about them. Prosecuting and getting convictions is only the first step. Implementing a regime of serious repercussions for those like Borutski who thumb their noses at obligations imposed following conviction, for example complying with probation or parole terms, is essential.

## Students help women's refuge

JULIA BEGGS | MADAWASKA VALLEY

The Student Activity Council at Madawaska Valley District High School and Sherwood School is selling Christmas cards designed by students to raise money for Bernadette McCann House women's shelter and our school. Profits will be split 50/50.

Five different designs are available, priced by quantity: Up to 10 cards (\$2.00 each), 10 to 25 cards (\$1.00 each), 26 to 99 cards (\$0.75 each), 100 cards or more (\$0.60 each). Order cards from Julia Beggs through MVDHS or by email to [beggsj@student.rcdsb.on.ca](mailto:beggsj@student.rcdsb.on.ca)



# I would like to introduce you to our guests

NANCY FORTUNE  
MADAWASKA VALLEY

We all breathe a collected sigh of relief when Labour Day passes. Kind of a “Phew, we did it!” moment. Our “phew” moment doesn’t really come till the end of October and I am always counting down the days till I can sit in my jammies and sip my morning coffee. Next year will be our twentieth year at the inn (how did that happen!) and the last two have been particularly busy ones.

I should be curled up in a semi-comatose state but here I am struggling to write this piece for you. Why then? Because I want to introduce you to your “tourists” and to share with you who they are, why they are here and what they experience. We have such lovely people come to stay and I think that gets lost in the whole “tourism” conversation.

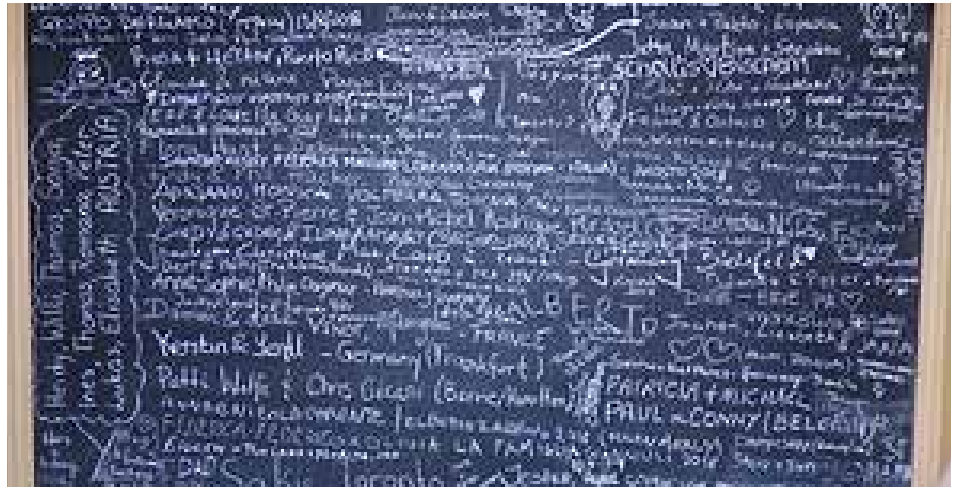
We tend to forget how staggeringly beautiful our Valley is and how lucky we are to know what fresh air smells like, what quiet sounds like and what dark looks like. But each season, when travellers arrive from all around the world (we had guests from 24 countries this year), I get to see the Valley through their eyes and am reminded to not take it for granted.

One young woman from the UK, with a look of total awe on her face, after coming back from Algonquin park said, “I have never seen anything like it. It was absolutely incredible. I will never forget it.”

I know she won’t.

Beyond a doubt, Algonquin Park is the number one tourism draw in our area. The Madawaska Valley is very fortunate to be on the Ottawa-Algonquin Park route. Most overseas travellers head here from Montreal or Toronto, often doing circular routes, which will take in Gananoque and Kingston too. But, and it still amazes me when this happens, some guests drive straight from Toronto airport to our inn, spend a week in Algonquin and the Valley, then fly home again. Humbling. “Of all the gin joints in all the towns in all the world...” Well, you get my drift.

This year, our guests were overwhelmingly European. There are so few wild spaces left in Europe and



Guest messages written on the Inn's blackboard. PHOTO: SUBMITTED

people are willing to cross the ocean to get away from it all. We have found, over the past few years, that the average age of these guests has dropped drastically and the length of stay has increased. Both things are fantastic. These delightful young people are here to get back to nature. They want to get into the forests and wild places. They want to hike and paddle. See moose and bear. Breathe fresh air, listen to the quiet and see the stars. They are not disappointed. Many will and do return. Honeymooners from Germany that stayed with us years ago returned this year with their children so they could spend time again in our “hood.”

We had so many guests from China last year and this fall that our catchphrase at the inn was, “China has come to visit.” Visits to Canada from China were up 11.8 percent in 2017 from 2016. That is 680,000 people! Our beautiful lakes are high on their list of must-sees and October is their preferred month to visit because of the leaves and, serendipitously, our autumn coincides with China’s week-long holiday in October called “Golden Week.”

Our Chinese visitors are on the move to see and experience as much possible. Who can blame them when they have travelled so far? Usually they stay for one night. Often one person in the party will have some English, but not always, and I think how brave they are to travel without the language, translation apps aside. They are keen and excellent photographers. I had one group

of women who had gotten half way to the Park only to come back because they hadn’t taken a picture with me. (Tears welled up, I can tell you.) They are interested and appreciative of any help you may offer. One couple with little English whom I helped find a room late one October night, drove back 20 minutes the next morning to present me with a tin of “special tea” before carrying on once more towards the Park. (Again, the tears welled up. I really have to work on that.)

If I could have you take away one thing it would be to see the individuals who come to stay not as tourists, but as people paying us an incredible compliment by choosing to visit our area. I know the stores get crazy and we may have to wait at the stop sign longer than usual, but of all the places in the world, these really gracious people have come to our Valley — and they love it here. How great is that?

*About the author: Nancy Fortune is a Ryerson University hospitality grad who has worked in the industry from the age of 14. She and her chef husband, Warwick, built a cottage in the Madawaska Valley in 1982 and moved here with their two children in 1992. They opened Fortune’s Madawaska Valley Inn in 1999. This year, the inn hosted guests from Germany, France, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands, China, Portugal, the UK, USA, Mexico, Australia, Japan, Czech Republic, Hungary, Denmark, Turkey, Finland, South Africa, Puerto Rico, and Israel.*



# The dark side of fruitcake

JOANNE OLSEN  
BARRY'S BAY

What on earth would a physiotherapist have to say about fruitcake? Fruitcake, Sufganiyot, Khrustyky, Midnight Madness, Black Friday. These terms are synonymous with the holiday season and the aching legs, backs and shoulders associated with the preparations.

As the holidays draw closer, experience tells me that I will be encountering patients reporting a sudden onset of pain that they cannot account for. There has been no slip and fall, no sudden, awkward lift. Yet they have pain. Detailed questioning identifies the culprit... holiday preparations... decorating, shopping, entertaining.

Marathon bakers present with repetitive strain from stirring heavy batter, rolling lengths of cookies, bending and lifting, and standing for hours at work surfaces that are either too high or too low. Shoppers complain of neck, back, hip and knee pain from hours of meeting the physical and mental challenges of navigating busy stores. Wrapping and decorating presents while sitting crouched on the floor leads to similar symptoms.

Reaching to install lights and decorations or lifting the perfect tree to its place of honour can put a damper on holiday spirits.

As with most physically demanding tasks the more active one has been through the remainder of the year, the greater the success at meeting the seasonal challenges.

The following tips could make the weeks to come much less stressful.

- Rotate your activities to break up awkward or repetitive tasks... wrap a present or two while your cookies bake.
- Maintain good body posture. Your work surface should be at waist height, your upper arms relaxed and forearms and wrists are straight.
- Alternate between sitting and standing to avoid fatigue.
- Take regular mini-breaks for stretching or moving to improve blood circulation and reduce muscle tension. Stay hydrated ... water!

- Use anti-fatigue mats or put one foot at a time on a foot rest, if you stand for long periods.
- Place materials/tools within easy reach.
- Set up your work area to avoid holding your arms at or above shoulder height for long periods.
- When lifting, decrease the size of the load whenever possible.
- When shopping, remember all shopping bags are not created equally. Consider bringing a better bag (a book bag) from home. There are also ergonomic grips available to place around multiple bag handles to ease strain on your hands.
- Distribute the weight of bags evenly. If you opt for a book bag from home, position the straps properly and wear it across both shoulders.
- Consider taking purchases to your vehicle... the fresh air will be welcomed.
- Minimize your own weight. Leave heavy winter coats in your vehicle. Thick fashionable scarves and wraps can lead to altered head/neck position and result in headaches.
- Don't forget the shoes! It is easy to hit 10,000 steps on a holiday shopping spree. That's nearly five miles for your feet so choose shoes appropriate for the excursion.
- If you choose on-line shopping, ensure your tablet/desk top is ergonomically correct.

Regardless of how you define holiday preparations—work or sport—they entail musculoskeletal demands. Always remember the spirit of the season, plan your activities, be patient and have fun. HAPPY, HEALTHY, HOLIDAYS!



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**BARRY'S BAY**  
**Legion** 

**GENERAL MEETING**  
**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 19**  
 7 pm, followed by  
 Christmas potluck—  
 bring your favourite item.

**LEGION CLUB ROOM**  
 Open Monday to Saturday  
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 to 8 pm. Hours may be  
 extended during scheduled  
 events. Open Sundays for  
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# An evening of elegance at annual Ladies Yuletide Tea

REVIEW AND PHOTOS BY  
SHARON GARDINER

The Combermere & Area Recreation Committee planned, organized and delivered an outstanding evening of elegance for all the ladies who were fortunate enough to have a seat at one of the tables. It takes an army of volunteers to pull off such a successful community event, and clearly Combermere has a dedicated army. Volunteers prepared platters of delicious sandwiches, trays of tasty baked goodies and they managed to decorate the Combermere Community Centre to look like something out of a Christmas movie.

Here's how it works: There are 14 tables up for grabs, each table seats eight ladies. When you book a table, you are called the "Hostess" of that table and the remaining seven seats go to ladies who will be your guests. Each guest pays \$12 for her seat; the Hostess does

not pay. The Hostess is responsible for decorating her table. This means pulling out your fine china, crystal, silver, vases, linen, decorations and so on. The Hostess also supplies the teapot, cream and sugar bowls. After all, this is a Tea Party! You could also use plastic forks/knives and paper plates if you choose. The Hostess does up her table in whatever fashion tickles her fancy. The Hostess must also provide a favour/gift for her seven guests. Every table is unique and no two tables look the same. Each and every table is a work of art and half the fun is gathering fresh ideas for your own tables at home.

Then, there are the men. There are plenty of handsome gentlemen dressed in their finery ready, willing and able to serve the ladies. Each table is assigned one Man-Server. Your Server will pour

your tea, bring you beverages (non-alcoholic) and keep you supplied with platters of sandwiches and trays of goodies.

Decorating Christmas trees is also an important part of this event. You can bring your own tree or a tree will be provided for you. All you have to do is bring your imagination and your decorations to the Community Centre and create your own magic. Again, each of the trees is unique and each one is a sight to behold.

This community event is held simply to provide a social outlet for the people of the Madawaska Valley and surrounding areas. When you bring a group of like-minded people together you create unity, uplift each other and leave with a sense of belonging. Job well done, Combermere & Area Recreation Committee!



Elegant decorations at Ladies Yuletide Tea. Mark Willmer serves Hostess Caroline Mallany (bottom right). PHOTOS: SHARON GARDINER