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Paugh Lake Road rehabilitation one step closer

DANIELLE PAUL
BARRY'S BAY

Minister John Yakabuski MPP Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke visited Barry's Bay on July 27 to announce that Ontario has nominated the Paugh Lake Road rehabilitation project for review in the federal Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). Members of Madawaska Valley Council and municipal staff were on site to greet Yakabuski.

Yakabuski said the province had approved the application for rehabilitation of 11.7 km of Paugh Lake Road as Laurie Scott, Minister of Infrastructure, had designated the project for review by the federal government under ICIP. He said that Ontario's contribution will be \$1,040,000 towards the \$3.121 million project. Yakabuski explained that ICIP involves shared responsibility:

- 40 percent contribution from the federal government
- 33.3 percent contributed by the province
- 26.7 percent comes from the municipality

Mayor Kim Love thanked Yakabuski and said this demonstrates that the province recognizes this is a vital infrastructure program. She described Paugh Lake Road as "an important artery for attracting tourism and promoting the economic vitality of our rural area." She said if the ICIP application is approved by the federal government, the municipality will be able to complete the entire 11.7 km in the next two years. She said the project would otherwise have taken MV up to ten years to do the work in stages.

MV resident Cheryl Dunlop Reid, District 6 Governor for the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC), agreed with Love about the importance of Paugh Lake Road in this region as a direct route to Pem-



From left: (front) Mayor Kim Love, MPP John Yakabuski, CAO/Clerk Suzanne Klatt, Councillor Carl Bromwich (back) Operations Manager Hilary Kutchkoskie and Operations Supervisor Mike Phillips.

broke. She reminded Yakabuski about the OFSC's recently-released study The Economic Impact of Snowmobiling in Ontario which calculated Visitor Spending in this region during last winter at \$99,458,752.

Dunlop Reid told *The Current* that as a resident who reaches her home via Paugh Lake Road, the project is important. She said, "I think it increases the visibility of our community for sure." She added, "Obviously [the road] needs to be done. It is a logging road and we

must not lose sight of that. It has to be built to a standard that can handle the logging trucks.... I don't mind sharing the road with the loggers."

When asked by *The Current* how soon the municipality will get a response, Yakabuski said the federal government is expected to "move quickly" from this stage. The Paugh Lake Road project is one of six applications in Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke that have gone forward for federal review under ICIP.

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Sunshine warms butterflies at Release

DANIELLE PAUL
BARRY'S BAY

Madawaska Valley Hospice Palliative Care held its fifth annual Memorial Butterfly Release at Water Tower Park in Barry's Bay on Sunday July 28. MV Hospice Clinical Director Karen Wagner welcomed the crowd, many of whom had attended the Release in previous years. She said butterflies are symbolic of hope and transformation, and their release is a healing experience for family and friends after the loss of a loved one. On arrival many people had placed handmade memorial cards and poems around the water tower.

Guest speaker and retired grief counsellor Dawn Cruchet discussed aspects of the grieving process and then guided attendees to prepare for the Butterfly Release. Volunteers passed through the crowd handing out boxes containing individual butterflies to those people who had ordered them. Children without individual butterflies were invited to help release a group of them to-

gether. Cruchet encouraged everyone to focus on what their butterfly meant to them personally. At the signal, about three hundred Monarch and Painted Lady butterflies were gently released – some en masse and others from individual boxes. There was excitement and wonder as they warmed their wings in the sunshine and then fluttered into the sky. Many butterflies settled on the flowers in the park.

Mark Kellett from Lucy's Butterfly Farm displayed some caterpillars and butterflies, and answered questions about the insects. Butterfly farmer Lucy-Anna Perna raises them at her farm in the Ontario Highlands region. Visitors learned that there are no negative ecological aspects to releasing these butterflies in Barry's Bay.

Executive Director Lisa Hubers thanked everyone in attendance, musician Reg Corey, event sponsors, St. Francis Valley Healthcare Foundation and the many Hospice and Gardening Society volunteers who had worked hard to ensure a successful Butterfly Release.



Dawn Cruchet in front of memorial cards

Summer reading suggestions

DOREEN YAKABUSKI
ON VACATION

Summer is not summer without taking time to relax with a good book. Here are some suggestions for novels to read at the cottage by the lake or in the backyard under a shady tree.

Meet me at the Museum by Anne Youngson is the debut novel of a 70-year-old. It is a warm-hearted, charming book featuring a correspondence between a farmer's wife in England and a museum curator in Denmark. The two develop an unlikely friendship. If you enjoyed *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society*, *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* or *84, Charing Cross Road*, pick up this one.

Mysteries make for great summer reads so why not choose one by a Canadian. I recommend *Dreadful Water* which is the first of a trilogy by Thomas King. It is a comic mystery featuring an Indigenous ex-cop. Another suggestion is one of the Rachel Getty/Esra Khattak books by Ausma Zehanat Khan which feature a Muslim detective and his female partner. There are five books in this series beginning with *The Unquiet Dead*. The great thing is that if you fall in love with a series, there are even more books to devour.

Anyone looking for a more serious read should try *Miracle Creek* by Angie Kim. It's a murder mystery, a courtroom thriller, and a family drama in the aftermath of an explosion at a special treatment centre. And then there's *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens which is a coming-of-age story, a survival tale, a romance, and a murder mystery. A man is found dead and the immediate suspect is Kya who has grown up alone in the marshes of coastal North Carolina. A film adaptation is being made of this latter book, so read it beforehand.

People who enjoy historical fiction should consider *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michele Richardson. It is a wonderfully researched book about the blue-skinned people of Kentucky, the Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project, and life in Depression-era Appalachia.

Romantic comedies make for great



PHOTO: UNSPLASH.COM

summer reads. I recommend *Ayesha at Last* by Uzma Jalaluddin. This *Pride and Prejudice* retelling set in the Muslim community in Toronto has humour and romance but is also thought-provoking.

While some people prefer light, breezy reads for the summer, others like to dive into really ambitious books. If you like a challenge, consider *Man of the Year* by Caroline Louise Walker, a character study of a man whose public persona is nothing like his private life. If you liked Herman Koch's *The Dinner*, this novel is for you. *Bina: A Novel in Warnings* by Anakana Schofield is narrated by an old woman who writes her life story on discarded envelopes and receipts in order to warn people not to make her mistakes. Hers is a voice you will not soon forget.

Complete reviews of all these books can be found on my blog: schatjesshelves.blogspot.com.

Happy summer! Happy reading!



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Legion

Bingo: Thursdays. Doors open at 6 pm, play at 7 pm.

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Pancake Breakfast: Third Sunday of the month 8 am–1 pm.

Legion Club Room: Open Monday to Saturday, 2 to 6 pm, and Friday to 8 pm. Hours may be extended during scheduled events. Open Sundays for major sporting/world events. Open to all, membership in the Legion not required.

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MV acknowledged as “A Community of Gardeners”

MARK WOERMKE
BARRYS BAY

Valley Manor's courtyard garden was the perfect venue for gardening enthusiasts and community boosters to celebrate beauty and community at Madawaska Valley's Communities in Bloom 2019 awards ceremony.

After a warm welcome, thanks to the Board and staff of Valley Manor, and an introduction of the judges, co-chairs Debbie Marshall and Elser Lee Faith Archer got straight to business announcing this year's winners in the various categories.

Valley Manor, the parkette between Talk o' the Town and Stedman's, and the Stafford Street Apartments won first, second and third respectively in the Community Garden category. Terry Newcombe, Marcia Rutledge, and Lynn Neuman and Ken Horst were the winners in the Vegetable Garden category. Deborah Agnew took first place in Best Flower Garden, with John and Karen Tierney coming second, and Bonnie Mask third. Lynn Neuman and Ken Horst, Dale Rutledge, and Mary Peterson were the top three entries in Best Residential Creative Planters while the Ash Grove Inn, Barry's Bay Metro, and Tyerman and Daughters Employment Centre were top in Best Business Beautification.

This year the difficult task of local judging fell to local media folks Kristina Boguski of the *Valley Gazette*, Danielle Paul of *The Madawaska Valley Current* and Trevor Smith-Millar of Moose FM. The Communities in Bloom judges who will judge the Madawaska Valley's participation in the national program were Evelyn Allemanni of California and Lucy Chang from Ottawa. Allemanni and Chang started their judging circuit in Saskatoon and will head to the Maritimes after their visit to the Madawaska Valley. While here they visited gardens, met with horticulturists, viewed heritage and environmental initiatives, and took a boat cruise on Lake Kamanisseg.

It was Allemanni's first visit to the Madawaska Valley, and she was im-



Valley Manor was represented at the ceremony by director Pierre-Paul Filion (left), resident and family service co-ordinator Marlene Shulist, maintenance assistant Randy Burchat, director Heather Poliquin, chairperson Kathy Marion and maintenance manager Martin Yaraskavitch. PHOTOS: MARK WOERMKE



Winners and Judges. Front: Marlene Shulist (Valley Manor), Lucy Chang (National Judge), Mary Peterson, Evelyn Allemanni (National Judge). Back: Randy Burchat (Valley Manor), Debbie Agnew, Terry Newcombe; Local Judges Danielle Paul, Katrina Boguski and Trevor Smith-Millar.



Lynn Neuman and Ken Horst, Best Residential Creative Container.



Deborah Agnew, Best Flower Garden

pressed and very enthusiastic about its beauty: "I am from Elfin Forest, California, where the trees are quite small, so I am very impressed with your beautiful forests and very large trees." In her comments following the awards pre-

sentation, Allemanni encouraged gardeners and the community to "Keep up the good work" while Chang commented that, from what they have seen, it is clear that the Madawaska Valley is "a community of gardeners."

Girl Guides camping trip in the “Serengeti”

SUBMITTED BY STACIE PECARSKI
AKA BROWN OWL

Thirty-four girls aged 5 to 17 from the Valley experienced camping in the Serengeti Bush Camp at the Toronto Zoo in June. Members of the 1st Barry's Bay Sparks, Brownies, Guides, Pathfinder and Ranger Unit, they were intentionally locked in the Zoo overnight and got to run around at dawn with black light flashlights while the African animals kept a very close eye on them.

After an early wakeup call and bus trip, they arrived at the Toronto Zoo at 10 a.m. The girls had free time to roam the Zoo with their parent or guardian and they “enjoyed the splash pad,” said Olivia. A ride in the zoomobile was much appreciated because “Our feet hurt from walking all day,” said Bella. The Unit received a personalized guided tour of the African animals, met Tony (a 4500 pound rhino) and fed some carrots and apples to an eland. After supper, the girls participated in a black light scavenger hunt. They enjoyed s'mores and finally went to bed at 11 p.m. They were awakened to Circle of Life and Hakuna Matata from Disney's Lion King and had breakfast with Tony the rhino, which Alexis said, “It was like a feast.” Their second day at the Zoo included another personal tour, a chance to touch a snake and learn about other African animals inside the exhibit. As the zoomobile took them back to the main gates, Jordyn said, “Sunday was the best day ever.” Cheyenne and Bella said a highlight was “spending time with just their moms.”

The 1st Barry's Bay Sparks, Brownie, Guide, Pathfinder, Ranger unit acknowledges community support over the past few years, without which their trip would not have happened. Donations paid for the trip to the zoo (Mus-cow bus lines and driver, Doug) and cookie sales covered a small fee per girl/adult and the overnight zoo admission. Some supporters include the Barry's Bay Legion Branch #406, the Ladies Auxiliary to Legion Branch #406 and the Combermere Craft Cabin. The Unit acknowledges our local businesses that allow us to sell our cookies each year like Barry's Bay Metro, Yuills Valu-mart,

St. Francis Memorial Hospital gift shop, and all of our parents and girls who take their cookie cases into their workplaces to sell as well as our girls for walking door to door, and all the people who buy our cookies!

The Unit also thanks the individuals in Barry's Bay and the surrounding ar-

eas who donated money to our group for our trip and all individuals who donated craft supplies throughout the years. Thanks also to the people donating a gift of time to our girls like Maggie (craft hours), and Kim Shalla (Zumba), knitting ladies and many more.



St. Joseph's Elementary School, grades 4 and 5, 1952-53

BOB CORRIGAN | **BARRY'S BAY**

This picture was taken during the school year 1952-53. We have already seen a grade four photo as well as a grade five photo.

It is believed that this one is a combination of grades four and five. It would be good to know if this is correct. Also, please let other readers know of any errors regarding names, or any reminiscences you might have.

Front Row: Dennis LaHaie, Edward Maika, Carman Palubiski, Billy Mackin, Norbert Cowan, Parnell Shalla, Terry Conway, Arthur Matusheskie.

Second Row: Joe O'Malley, Jean Dwyer, Marilyn Recoskie, Cecilia

Conway, Joyce Lorbetskie, Anna Mary Coulas, Colleen Luckasavitch, Diane Shushack, Madeline Gutoskie, Bernice Dombroskie, Desmond Kulas.

Third Row: Rose Marie White, Joan Hildebrandt, Adele Coulas, Rose Mary Dwyer, Catherine Shalla, Phyllis Cybulskie, Marie Fitzgerald, Loretta Maika, Lorraine Trebinskie, Helen Matusheskie, Florence Belkwell. Teacher: Sr. Leona.

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. Originals will be returned.

Fire chief salutes fire-fighting members of public



The Fire Chief said the fire was caused by a carelessly discarded cigarette he found at the edge of the shoulder. PHOTO: SUBMITTED

SUBMITTED MADAWASKA VALLEY

Madawaska Valley Fire Chief Corwin Quade wants to thank quick-thinking members of the public who helped prevent the spread of a ditch fire on July 26. Six trucks and sixteen fire fighters attended the wild fire at the intersection of Byers Road and Combermere Road, after the alarm was raised by a passing motorist who saw fire burning in the

south ditch.

"As I pulled up to the fire I could see about 20 people stop along the road. They were extinguishing the fire and preventing the spread of the fire. These people were amazing as if it was not for their quick actions, this could have turned into something huge. There is a Pine Plantation less than 75 feet from the fire. If it would have gotten into that we would have been in big trouble. I would like to say to whoever helped

out, thanks so much. It was greatly appreciated," Quade said.

Quade arrived with the North Hall rescue truck and used a pack can to extinguish the logs and edge of the fire. The South Hall arrived and watered down the entire area. The Fire Department was on the scene for about 40 minutes and used 1000 gallons of water to soak the area. The fire covered an area approximately 150 feet by 30 feet. The Fire Chief said the fire was caused by a carelessly discarded cigarette he found at the edge of the shoulder. This call arrived less than 24 hours into MV's total Fire Ban. He urges members of the public to be vigilant during the ban as "Things are extremely dry."



Investigation into suspicious death of Barry's Bay man continues

Readers of *The Current's* online edition will know that the OPP are investigating the circumstances surrounding the death of local man, Sylvester Glynskie, who passed away on January 19 at the age of 79.

An OPP representative recently confirmed that the investigation, now in its sixth month, has not yet concluded. A death is regarded as suspicious if it is unexpected and its circumstances or cause are medically or legally unexplained. Typically this occurs in the context of medical care, suicide or suspected criminal activity.

Library prepares for new strategic plan

DANIELLE PAUL
MADAWASKA VALLEY

Madawaska Valley Public Library wants community feedback this summer to develop its strategic plan for the next five years. Community input received in 2014 has guided the library's activities and it now wants to hear from you again.

The library board asks that residents complete a survey by the end of September. Forms are available at the Library and will be at the Farmers' Market in Barry's Bay on Friday August 2. Residents can also complete an online survey.

Library Board Chair Frances Mawson told a community forum on July 17 that libraries have moved on from being just a place to get books. They have changed not just technologically, but also in the role they play in society. She said the Board wants to address the Library's expanding and changing role in the community. This involves not only the building itself, but also what goes on in the building.

FORUM SUGGESTION "LOSE THE BOOKS"

In a brainstorming exercise at the community forum, Mawson asked participants to break into groups and "think big" without any budgetary constraints. They responded with visions of a library complex with a community theatre, indoor/outdoor fitness centre including a swimming pool, language learning labs, music studios, healthy living activities, meeting and workshop spaces, and much more.

Mawson also asked them to think of ways to achieve some of these ideas within the existing building which prompted one group to suggest that the library remove the books and go completely digital so as to free up space for other community purposes.

Forum attendees also considered what places and organizations the library could collaborate with to better serve the community. Responses included the municipality, mobile library vehicles, schools and sports facilities.

Library CEO Karen Filipkowski

said the 2014 planning process gave them direction, and helped them see what was achievable and important. She said the two biggest limitations the library has had to deal with during the past five years are space and technology. Renovating the main floor space and adding security measures for the children's area were among the improvements achieved since the 2014 plan.

Filipkowski said residents can speak

to any library board member. They are: Frances Mawson (Chair), Peter Fright (Vice-Chair), Natalie Barrington, Shawn Eagles, Bill Houle, and Council representatives Andrea Budarick (for Brudenell Lyndoch and Raglan) and Mark Willmer (for Madawaska Valley).

She said, "We are hoping for lots of feedback from the community. We're really hoping those surveys get filled out. They are online and available in the Library."

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Sowing seeds of division – déjà vu at MV Council

THE CURRENT EDITORIAL

Following the Council meeting of June 18, *The Current* wrote to Councillor Ernie Peplinski seeking clarification of comments he made during the meeting about the distribution of Canada Day grant funding. Those statements seemed calculated to leave the impression that Combermere had been unfairly bypassed. They included a complaint that "... someone in isolation is filling this in ..." [referring to the grant application] implying that there had been no consultation, and also that it was "embarrassing."

In its email to him of June 24, *The Current* quoted some of his comments and asked him if he believed that Combermere had been unfairly bypassed for the funding. No reply has been received.

After discussions with other members of Council, *The Current* examined relevant Minutes of meetings that preceded his outburst on June 18. Reading these and listening to the Township's Soundcloud recordings of the meetings held on February 7 and June 4 was enlightening. They confirm that Councillor Carl Bromwich, the previous Recreation Committee Chairman, together with Recreation & Community Development Co-ordinator Stephanie Plebon (who was cross-examined by Peplinski), and CAO/Clerk Sue Klatt all told Peplinski in no uncertain terms that the reason why Combermere did not receive funds was simply because it had not requested them before the deadline. It had nothing to do with Township staff "filling out forms in isolation."

Councillor Mark Willmer, who now chairs the Recreation Committee, described the funding allocation procedure: "In my experience Council would expect staff to apply for the maximum grant that is available; however, there is a process to be followed. Staff (i.e. CAO/Clerk and Recreation staff), working with community groups, would write the grant application. Staff would then bring a report to Council – this would normally be 'or information and discussion.' This is when Council would have a chance to comment and provide

Cover of 2015–19 The Path Forward.



additional input with the understanding that staff are the subject experts and have completed community consultation and have brought forward a recommendation that best serves the Township as a whole. Since this report is based on community consultation, the 'staff recommendation' would normally be approved."

Therefore, when the Minutes of the previous meeting were up for approval, Peplinski made his comments knowing that not only had there been "community consultation" but more importantly it had not resulted in a request from Combermere for funds. But in order to assist Combermere residents after having missed out, staff recommended a special payment of \$500 from taxpayer funds (not grant money) be given to them through a donation to the Combermere Recreation Committee to help support kids' games at the CO Blitz celebration.

Have we not seen this movie before? Peplinski has a history of targeting Township staff for simply doing their jobs if it suits his agenda. From 2015 through 2017, he and his ally, former Councillor Maika, carried out what was then described as a "vendetta" against Recreation Department staff to curtail, if not completely eliminate, the activities carried out under the auspices of South of 60 at the Railway Station.

Their behaviour during this period resulted in harassment/human rights infringement charges (resulting in among other things a public apology by

Peplinski), allegations of bullying, stress leave, and a firing "without cause." It all culminated in a virtual shut-down of activities at the Railway Station, justified on the basis of there being a "staff shortage." And whose fault was that? Another casualty was the loyal corps of volunteers who were major contributors to the recreational, arts and culture scene.

Why must we revisit those turbulent times? The answer is that his Canada Day grant insinuations suggest that Peplinski may be using the same playbook; i.e., blatant grandstanding on the backs of employees who have no pulpits of their own to answer back. His failure to confirm to *The Current* that his comments may have been misinterpreted speaks volumes.

Last year's election campaign confirmed that divisiveness on the previous Council had resulted in not only gridlock among its members at times, but also provoked "inter-village friction." This had been previously flagged up in the municipality's 2015–2019 strategic plan *The Path Forward* as a worrying trend. As Council will soon review that plan, it is to be hoped that they will consider the experience of the past five years and take appropriate steps to condemn behaviour that may foment such friction, including re-emphasizing that each member of Council is elected to serve the community as a whole – in these post-amalgamation times.

This has been abridged for print from our online article..

Beach volleyball tournament nets \$8,500 for HD research



A stream winners Beaches Love Me.

DANIELLE PAUL BARRY'S BAY

Forty teams arrived before 8 a.m. at Lakeshore Park in Barry's Bay on July 20 to participate in the 17th annual Beach Volleyball Tournament. They brought with them kids, dogs, hats, sunscreen, lots of water, and everything needed for an fun-filled day beside Kamaniskew Lake.

The event organizers laid on rockin' music, four sizzling sandy courts (thanks to the extremely hot summer weather with assistance from MV Township staff), food and barbecue, raffles, prizes, a nice shiny trophy, and many volunteers to ensure the day went smoothly for all. Everyone pitched in to tidy the site after play ended. The purpose of the annual event is to raise money for Huntingdon's Disease research. Organizer Melissa Craftchick was excited to tell The Current that this year's tournament netted \$8,500 for the cause.

Aided by sunshine and a beautiful lakeside setting, the vibe was relaxing. Multi-generational teams competed with good humour and sportsmanship. Craftchick said that most of the teams were co-ed and the rules require two female players per team on court at all times, but this year there were also two all-women teams. There was much discussion about whether The Avengers

(who had captured the trophy the past four years) would be able to match their performance in 2019.

In the end, they didn't make the play-offs and the trophy went to Beaches Love Me who won the A stream final. The B stream final was won by The Unknowns. Thanks to the generosity of more than 40 business and individual sponsors, there were prizes galore and the raffle made a big contribution towards the total funds raised.

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Help sought to reduce illegal dumping

A Valley ratepayer has asked Madawaska Valley Township to consider different methods of waste and recycling collection.

The proposal by Wendy Wolak, a Director of the Carson, Trout, Lepine and Greenan Lakes Association (CTLG Lakes), was recently referred to the Public Liaison Committee. They asked that Wolak arrange for CTLG Lakes to conduct a survey of residents in the municipality to see if her suggestion has support. (Full disclosure: *The Current's* editor is also a CTLG Lakes director.)

Wolak said, "Untagged bags of garbage left in driveways, illegal dumping, and increased littering along our

area's roadways and in our lakes appears to be becoming more prevalent. My objective is to bring garbage and recycling collection services to rural areas within the Madawaska Valley by examining different alternative strategies such as positioning a waste and recycling truck at specified locations and times throughout the Valley to serve as a drop off for residents. Some of us have to travel more than 18 km one way to a waste site. I believe this inconvenience contributes to the illegal dumping and littering that is happening throughout the Valley."

Residents are asked to complete the 2-minute online survey by August 23. Survey link at ctlglakes.com



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St. Lawrence O'Toole parish picnic

DANIELLE PAUL
BARRY'S BAY

Parishioners of St. Lawrence O'Toole enjoyed a 1930s style picnic to celebrate the parish's 85th anniversary on July 14.

There was no shortage of entertainment as the organizing committee arranged for a bouncy castle and games for children, a barbecue, live music, prize draws, raffles, a photo booth, some vintage vehicles, a live performance of local history readings, to mention just a few of the offerings.

Good old fashioned fun was the order of the day. Many dressed in '30s era clothing for the occasion and took advantage of the old cars and photo booth to capture a memory.

The fun-filled afternoon saw families and friends gather for food, music and laughter.

The podcast recorded live during the picnic is now available online. You can listen to the St. Lawrence O'Toole parish history episode by searching for either The Opeongo Line or Opeongo Readers' Theatre on your favourite podcast player app.



Liz Murray (left) and Joanne Olsen pose in front of a 1935 Ford Canadian-built standard sedan driven to the picnic by Ron MacDonald. Meticulously restored and repainted in its original Washington Blue with Poppy Red hand-painted pinstripe, this Ford would have cost \$750 new in its day.



Live audience at the recording of parish history by Opeongo Readers' Theatre heard the Opeongo Podcast Players (from left) Heather Poliquin, Karen Yakabuski, Lois Losole.

Wilno Rink official opening



From left: Carl Bromwich, Constance Leahy, Joanne Plebon, John Yakabuski, Rob Bersan, Jeff Burchat, John Jeffrey

DANIELLE PAUL
WILNO

The ribbon was finally cut to officially open the Wilno Rink on July 12. The Wilno Recreation Committee (WRC), along with municipal representatives from both Madawaska Valley and Killaloe Hagarty Richards, celebrated the occasion with special guests Jeff Burchat of J. Burchat Construction, Ontario Trillium East Region grant reviewer Ray Westgarth and Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski.

The event marked the significant achievements of Wilno and area residents who have provided the community with a new building for the facility.

In her welcome, WRC member Constance Leahy said, "Anyone who ever attended a moccasin dance in February at minus 30 degrees, stood here warming up by our wood stove and watching kids play hockey until midnight knows the spirit of this community." She thanked the Trillium Foundation for recognizing the importance of what they do. Leahy thanked both municipalities for their ongoing support over the past years. She said the WRC had worked hard since 2013, was incredibly proud of being part of this venture and said the opening event celebrated a dream come true.

Ray Westgarth brought greetings and congratulations from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and presented a commemorative plaque. KHR Mayor Janice Visneskie-Moore offered her congratulations and was thanked for the financial contribution from the Township. Councillor Carl Bromwich gave Leahy a Certificate of Achievement from MV Township.

Acting for Mayor Kim Love, Councillor Dave Shulist presented Leahy with MV Township's cheque for \$5,000. Arriving shortly after the ribbon-cutting, MPP John Yakabuski congratulated WRC members as he admired the features of the newly-built structure and reminisced about life in Wilno and various family members playing on the rink.

WRC member Joanne Plebon told The Current that despite receiving the Trillium award for the construction project, there remains a shortfall and the Committee's fund-raising efforts will continue. She said that while sports events are not scheduled at the rink during the summer, the building is available for hire and has already been used for some baby showers.

Anyone who forgot to buy their rink membership or wants to inquire about renting the facility is welcome to do so at any time during the year by contacting WRC members.

www.madvalleycurrent.com

MV Artisan Festival

DANIELLE PAUL
MADAWASKA VALLEY

The Artisan Festival celebrated its thirty-fifth anniversary in Madawaska Valley on July 13. Some familiar faces were among the 14 vendors set up in Railway Station Park in Barry's Bay, and visitors were entertained by live music from local musicians as they browsed through the artisans' booths.



Bernard Long of Atelier Pierre de Lune brought his jewellery from New Brunswick.



Hollow Clayworks pieces created by Julie Poliquin.



Original intarsia work captures the spirit of Valley wood.

Combermere artists on Studio Tour

DANIELLE PAUL
COMBERMERE

Art lovers have enjoyed travelling around to artists during the annual Madawaska Valley Studio Tour for decades. But only in the past three years have they enjoyed a Summer Tour, and this year artists' studios are open for three-day weekends during both Summer and Fall Tours. Valley visitors and residents don't have to go far to find quality work as seen in Combermere this month.

Artist Janusz Charzuk regularly opens his Holy Icon Studio for the Tour. His career began as an architect and designer in Poland and, since the 1980s, has continued in the United States and Canada. He was fascinated with traditional tempera icon painting since his fine arts training in Europe and

he found a mentor with whom he studied in Toronto. His artistic practice includes creating original icons as well as copies of traditional images.

Dye Devereaux was a regular exhibitor at the Madawaska Valley Artisan Festival with her silk paintings. In the past few years, she has shifted to acrylic paintings of wildlife images. Her bespoke studio and gallery is filled with both original paintings and reproductions in various sizes produced here in the Valley by Bayberry Designs.

Guest artist Loreen Walker is new on the Studio Tour. A Combermere resident, Walker was inspired by attending a workshop in fibre sculpture at the Barry's Bay Railway Station. For three years she has created whimsical indoor/outdoor fairy sculptures from textiles. Some are hanging pieces while others can be displayed in the garden.



Janusz Charzuk displays Virgin Mary of Sokal (in progress).



Loreen Walker with some of her textile sculptures.



Dye Devereaux outside her studio.



Artwork by Dye Devereaux.