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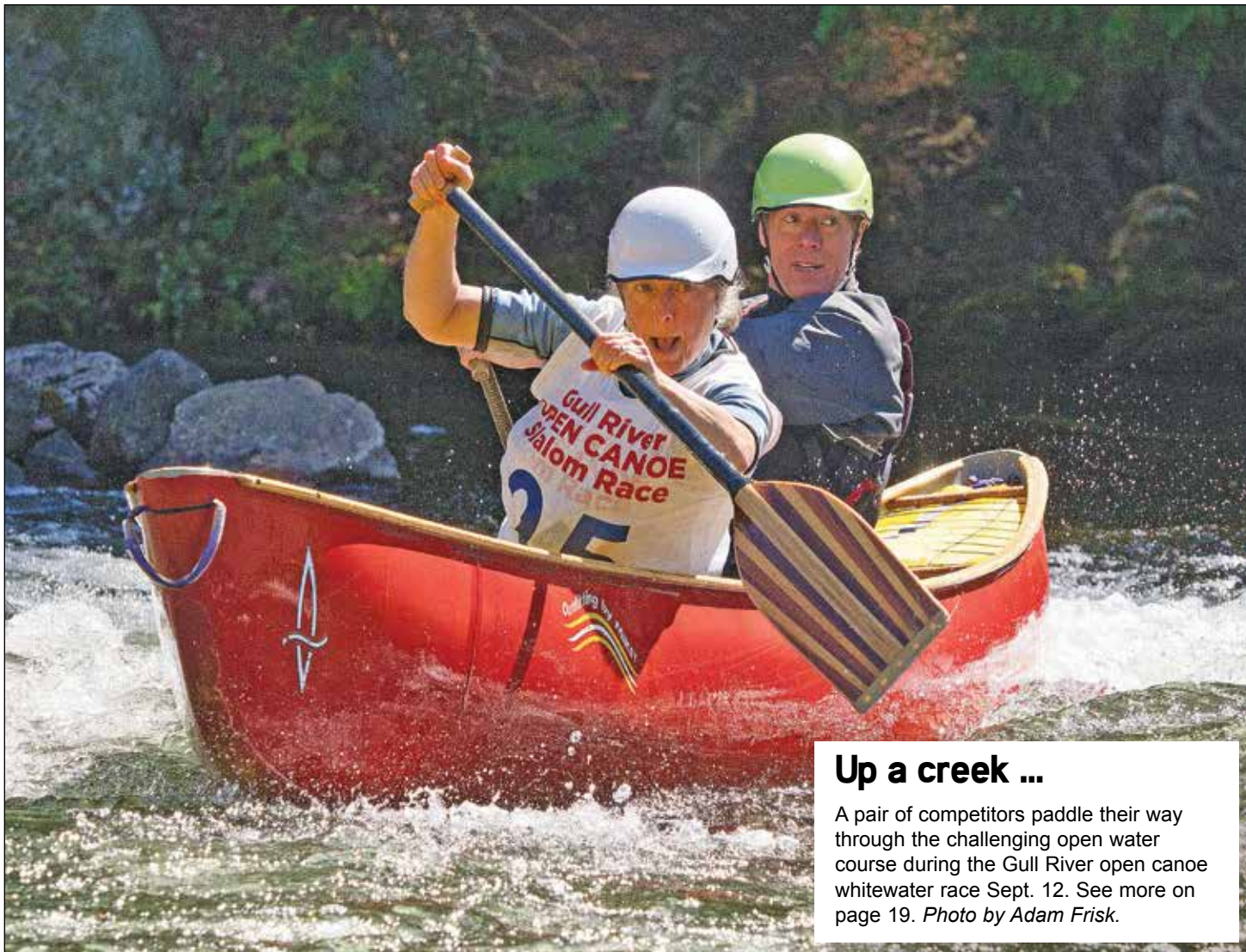


The Highlander

Thursday **Sept 17 2026** | Issue 757

INSIDE: HALIBURTON FOREST RUN PAGE 16

FREE



Up a creek ...

A pair of competitors paddle their way through the challenging open water course during the Gull River open canoe whitewater race Sept. 12. See more on page 19. *Photo by Adam Frisk.*

County and township staff pull in \$4M annually

By Lisa Gervais

Local government taxpayers are spending more than \$4 million every year on senior managers at the County of Haliburton and the four townships, councillors at an affordability and governance meeting were told Sept. 9 in Minden.

Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) consultant, Maureen Adams, said there are five chief administrative officers making a combined \$1,224,976. Seven clerks and deputy clerks are bringing in \$1,018,810 per annum. Six planning managers garner \$1,014,243 annually, and five treasury managers another \$891,698.

Adams suggested compensation for senior managers is something to consider as councillors grapple with changes proposed in the affordability and governance study.

She did not offer staffing models for change, or dollar figures attached to them.

Adams said, “through our last few sessions, people were asking a lot of questions around more information financially. I recognize, depending on what changes council might be considering, you don’t want to do it for something that’s not significant, or might not really make a difference.”

Adams added the fresh information presented last week spoke to “capacity building.

“If you were to consider a new model, there might be opportunities for capacity building where you redeploy some of those funds to infrastructure,

Continued **‘Benefits’** on page 5

Hali anglers take the classic

By Lisa Gervais

Two Haliburton County anglers have won the 2026 Competitive Sport Fishing League National Classic.

Cam Neville and Brian Johnston won the championship, held Sept. 12 and 13 on Lake Couchiching, with a two-day total weigh-in of 41.2 lbs.

The locals received \$10,000 for beating out 85 other competitors, including some professionals.

Neville told *The Highlander* Tuesday (Sept. 15) he was excited about the win, while acknowledging it hadn’t really sunk in yet.

“I don’t know if the stars just aligned or what...it was a very good weekend.”

He said he’s competed in the classic – which celebrated its 30th anniversary this year – “for a long time, trying to win it.”

He and Johnston started fishing together competitively in 2018. Neville took Johnston on his first tournament, which they won, “and it just snowballed from there.”

Neville said this past weekend started Continued **‘Persistence’** on page 2

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Brian Johnston and Cam Neville are classic champions. Submitted.

‘Peristence’ pays off

Continued from page 1

off slow. However, they changed location and, “right away, (Brian) hooked a four-and-a-quarter pound large bass, maybe five minutes later, he caught a five-and-a-quarter pound smallmouth.” The catches kept coming, “and we weren’t even going to go that way.”

Johnston said on day two, Sunday, they hunkered down in one big area with six feet of water. “We just spent the whole day finessing the area to get the fish to bite.” Neville said Johnston’s mastery of the live scope definitely came in handy.

Neville further attributed “persistence” for the win. “Having the confidence in that spot...knowing that there were fish around there. You just have to find them and catch them.”

Over the weekend, they used Jarrod Dean’s Punisher jigs. They had used them in a tournament on Lake Simcoe earlier this summer and finished second. They caught all their fish on the jig that looks like a crayfish.

Neville doesn’t know why, speculating “the fish might not have seen them before...they certainly like to eat them.”

As the two headed back to shore Sept. 13, Neville said he knew they had a chance at victory, since he had competed so many times in the classic. Johnston added talking

to top teams in the parking lot, he was told they hadn’t had great days.

“I had a feeling we were going to win, but I just didn’t want to get my hopes up,” Johnston said.

Finding out they’d done it, Johnston said it hadn’t sunk in for him either, until Tuesday, as people began sending congratulatory messages.

He said the win was partial luck, but the team had also made the right moves.

Neville said he’d been fishing for as long as he can remember, always finding the hobby to be relaxing. Growing up in Lochlin, he and a buddy used to bike or walk to Scott’s Dam to put a line in. Now, he’ll “go anywhere I can here.” He wanted to thank his family for all of their support.

Johnston was born and raised in Haliburton County, ice fishing with his dad. He considers Boshkung his home lake, but fishes every lake in the Highlands.

He recalled the first time he got into a 12-foot tinny, getting into bass fishing. He never imagined he’d be a classic winner. He admitted he had shed a tear, commenting, “the young me would be pretty proud, especially going against some people who have known Lake Couchiching for over 20 years.”



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MP: military changes ‘break from tradition’

By Mike Baker

A Haliburton reverend said he wasn't surprised by recent changes introduced by the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) to limit religious references at some official military ceremonies, while the area's MP, Jamie Schmale, believes the move is an unnecessary break from tradition.

Rolling out July 31, the new rules strip active CAF members, volunteers, students, casual workers and contractors from using religious-specific language – including references to God – at sanctioned military events such as graduation parades, change of command ceremonies, ship commissioning, dedications for infrastructure projects, honours and awards ceremonies, seasonal mess dinners and CAF-led Remembrance Day services.

Instead, those references are to be replaced by “spiritual reflections” that focus on lessons learned, beliefs, values and experiences to inspire gratitude, remembrance, hope and integrity, a directive on the Government of Canada website reads.

Schmale said the changes were being driven by the Liberal government and had been in the works since October 2023, after a directive was issued to military chaplains to “carefully choose words that are inclusive” when speaking to people, including atheists, at public events.

“I don't think you need to erase tradition. Military prayers and religious observances have provided comfort and meaning to generations of Canadians that have served,” Schmale said. “When I speak to veterans today, many say there are no atheists in a foxhole.”

The Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes member of parliament said he wasn't a fan of handcuffing chaplains.

“When you have a chaplain of whatever denomination doing a service, defining appropriate language, to me, doesn't mean inclusion. It means exclusion,” Schmale said. “I just don't think this honours the traditions of those who came before.”

While the rules won't impact local-level Remembrance Day observances, Schmale said it could be a noticeable change for those who tune into the nationally-broadcast services from Ottawa.

CAF acting chaplain general, Shaun Yaskiw, told the *National Post* last month

that the goal of the new guidance is to ensure everyone attending military-led events feel their beliefs are being valued.

“As a chaplain, it is my professional responsibility to be able to see and respect the full expression of spiritual and religious beliefs of those who come to me,” Yaskiw said.

The change does not restrict chaplains from offering spiritual or religious care in private settings, including counselling, faith-specific gatherings, worship services and requested religious rites.

There's also an allowance for Indigenous practices to be used in military settings for cultural, historical and educational purposes – though they must be relevant to the occasion or framed explicitly within an educational or cultural context.

Mixed opinion

Harry Morgan, minister for the Haliburton Pastoral Charge, said he hadn't heard about the changes before *The Highlander* contacted him in mid-August. While he said he “gets it,” believing the government wants to be seen as neutral and secular without showing preference to any particular belief, he's not sure what the amendment accomplishes.

“I don't believe this benefits anyone. Instead of including the rich history of faith traditions in our beloved Canada, our ceremonies will feature bland, generic ‘spiritual reflections,’” Morgan said.

“A better and more inclusive solution would be to use expressions or prayers of different faith traditions in proportion to their numbers in the military – or in the nation,” he added.

After witnessing firsthand, the ever-decreasing influence of religion on society, Morgan felt a move like this was inevitable.

“No longer is the Lord's Prayer said in public schools. Some have advocated for the use of ‘Happy Holidays’ in place of ‘Merry Christmas’, and in our national anthem the words have been changed from ‘all Thy Son's command’ to ‘in all of us command’. I'm surprised we still have ‘God keep our land’,” Morgan added.

Glenn Woods, the Royal Canadian Legion's veterans' service officer for the zone, said the change doesn't impact him personally but that he has heard concerns



MP Jamie Schmale isn't in favour of new rules limiting religious references at some official Canadian Armed Forces events. *File.*

from local members.

“I've talked to a few veterans about this – one of them went through boot camp and into battle, their sense is they would like things kept as they are. They want to stick with tradition,” Woods said.

A member of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry seeing active service, Woods said there used to be a mandatory church services held in fields that all members had to attend.

“They'd make a big deal of it with the

drums and then someone would deliver the sermon,” Woods said. “Things change though, religion doesn't have as much of a grip on life today as it did 50-100 years ago, and I don't think that's a bad thing.”

Schmale is calling on the government to reconsider parts of the directive.

“Consult with chaplains, veterans, faith communities and try to come up with an approach that protects both inclusion and religious freedom. I think that's probably the best path forward,” Schmale said.

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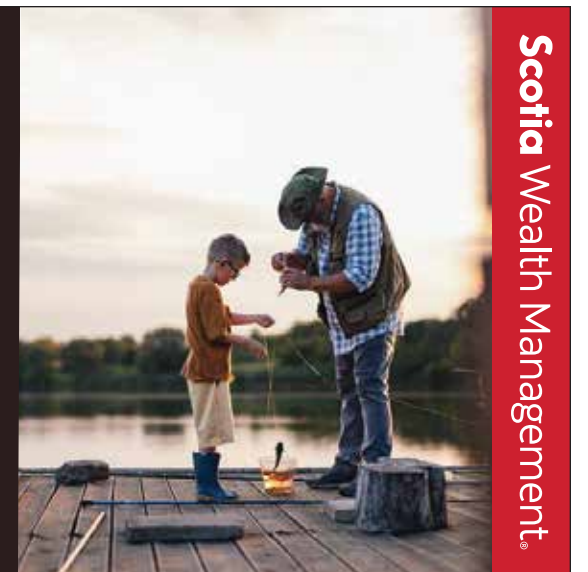
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Local voices guiding TLDSB decisions

By Mike Baker

The voices of nearly 4,000 parents and guardians, along with hundreds of students, are helping shape how the Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) responds to some of the biggest challenges facing its schools – from classroom behaviour and homework to bullying, mental health and the impact of social media.

Chief education officer, Wes Hahn, provided an update in August on the ‘TLDSB Voices’ initiative, which he said is becoming increasingly embedded in the board’s strategic and operational planning.

The program encourages engagement with parents, guardians and students on key issues, ensuring communities play a meaningful role in identifying future priorities board-wide and for individual sites, Hahn said.

“The more we’ve built our operational plans throughout our system on Voices, the more it comes alive,” Hahn said.

Over the past five years, the board has conducted twice-yearly parent and guardian check-ins, school climate surveys for students and staff, hosted advisory group meetings, student forums and community breakfasts with local agencies.

Nearly 2,400 families responded to a fall 2025 survey, followed by another 1,550 respondents in spring 2026. The board also posted 33 policies to its virtual ‘Engage TLDSB’ platform, which families can use to participate in surveys and provide input on new or changing board policies.

Hahn said 139 responses were considered by TLDSB staff last year, with the feedback producing some clear priorities for the board.

“We heard loud and clear... that we can do a better job transitioning work between our community agencies and TLDSB. That’s something we will do better,” Hahn said, specifically mentioning daycare providers and mental health agencies.

Violent behaviour in the classroom, and the board’s policy on handling those situations, also came up.

“Parents expressed concerns regarding classroom dysregulation and behaviour issues, noting the need to vacate classrooms due to incidents that disrupt student learning. TLDSB is working with staff to provide training and support to navigate behavioural challenges in the classroom,” he said.

Balancing screen time and the utilization of artificial intelligence in instruction is also constantly evolving, though Hahn said TLDSB wants to put more of a focus on traditional hands-on learning. He specifically mentioned encouraging students to read physical books, write with a pen and paper, or have conversations with classmates rather than texting or instant messaging.

TLDSB is also going back to the drawing board when it comes to homework.

“What is the purpose of homework? What is the research and evidence behind issuing



TLDSB chief education officer, Wes Hahn, said parent and student feedback is helping to shape future programs. *File.*

it? Yes, there’s purpose when it helps build stamina, good routine and things kids will need in the future, but often parents say it becomes a very frustrating evening for their kids. So, we need to find a balance,” Hahn said.

Student feedback

TLDSB hosted three forums for students in Grades 7-10 last year, with Hahn saying he and other senior staff wanted to hear directly from teenagers on what’s working at schools and what isn’t. Around 90 students attended the three events.

“The feedback indicated that marginalized and racialized students often feel unsafe or unrecognized in schools... one of the key areas within the forum is the whole idea of students wanting to know when something is done – whether they experience discrimination or bullying – that something will be done about it,” Hahn said.

In response, TLDSB had developed an ‘anti-racism’ resource guide for teachers and administrators. Hahn said it’s filled with actionable items on how teachers can follow through with issues and how principals can support them.

“We can’t have students feeling afraid or unsafe because of this type of behaviour,” Hahn said.

Anxiety and depression levels remain a concern, while Hahn said students also want more individualized support and real-life guidance from teachers.

“They want to be more prepared. They talked about being afraid for the future, not feeling equipped yet. We do great work with kids through our post-secondary pathways program, but we can probably do more,” Hahn said.

HE clarifies STR enforcement

By Adam Frisk

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Property owners in Highlands East now have more clarity on how the municipality plans to enforce its short-term rental rules, following changes approved by council.

Council signed off on a revised short-term rental (STR) licensing bylaw during the Sept 8 regular meeting of council. The updated file removes administrative steps and provides further details about how operators who deliberately break the rules could face serious penalties.

The tweaks follow months of internal review after councillors requested further clarification during an August meeting. Presenting the finalized report, STR licensing clerk and enforcement officer, Stacey Brown, explained the amendments address gaps in the bylaw and remove procedures that staff considered unnecessary.

"The proposed amendments are intended to address identified gaps and improve the overall clarity, completeness, and effectiveness of the bylaw," Brown told council.

Council had spent much of the discussion on revised wording in Sections 13.1 and 13.2. Drafted in consultation with municipal bylaw enforcement, the sections outline potential liability for fines under the Provincial Offences Act.

While the financial penalties can be steep, Brown assured council they aren't meant to be handed out routinely. Instead, they would be used only in exceptional cases after other compliance and enforcement measures have been exhausted.

According to the staff document, operators can face fines of up to \$50,000 on first offence, and no more than \$100,000 on a second offence and each subsequent offence thereafter.

"Any fine pursuant to this provision would be at the discretion of the provincial court and would only be considered in exponential circumstances where all available compliance and enforcement measures have been exhausted," Brown said.



Highlands East deputy mayor Cec Ryall wanted more clarity on new rules. *File.*

She said that such circumstances would likely involve "significant safety concerns or prolonged and deliberate non-compliance."

Council supported the enforcement measures, though deputy mayor Cecil Ryall asked that staff make it clear in the bylaw about how and when penalties can escalate. If the township decides to take a STR operator who is non-compliant to court, Ryall said, having the enforcement process clearly explained in plain language would give residents fair warning.

"Is it possible to give a little more clarity on what would trigger something like that?" the deputy mayor asked. "The way you explained it here, makes absolute sense, but I would like to see it in the document somewhere that lets people know if you're not going to pursue this... we're going to have to take it to court and they're going to decide."

Brown agreed to check in with the enforcement team about drafting public-facing guidance explaining how the escalation process works.

The township is also streamlining the licence application process by eliminating Section 8.1(b). Previously, the clause required municipal staff to hold up an application until they could physically verify that any outstanding property repairs or modifications had been completed.

Staff recommended removing the rule after deeming it redundant. Brown explained staff already work directly with property owners to address issues as they arise.

"In practice, if an issue is brought to staff's attention regarding a particular property, staff will work collaboratively with the property owner to address and resolve the matter," Brown said. "If the property owner refuses to take corrective action or is unwilling to address the issue within a reasonable time frame, staff already have the authority to revoke the licence."

The recommendation to adopt the report and formally enact the amended bylaw passed unanimously, moved by Coun. Cam McKenzie and seconded by Coun. Ruth Strong.

Benefits being part of a bigger group

Continued from page 1

and to other things that maybe aren't getting done. Capacity building really helps the municipality operate more proactively, adapt more easily, and remain sustainable."

Adams added it could mean taking on in-house services, engineering for example, versus contracting out. She said it could lessen duplication that now exists among the five municipalities.

"It promotes long-term, sustainable, service delivery for municipalities. So, overall capacity building has to be one of the big components that you think about if you're making a decision on a government structure moving forward."

She provided other examples, such as information technology. She said if it was all done through the County, rather than one staff member assigned to doing the

work at each township, it would be more effective.

Adams said it applied to finance as well; with five different accounting systems; budgets; audits; and four townships issuing tax bills. "If that was consolidated into one area, there's efficiencies to be created. You wouldn't have five payroll people. You might have one, one-and-a-half, or two. And, then, those resources would allow you to be able to be a little bit more proactive in some of your financial management, such as investments."

Adams said capacity building could further help with risk management for insurance and better asset management planning. The consultant said the planning and building departments are other good examples.

"You have five official plans in this region. If you had one plan, it would make it easier for anybody that's looking at development and building within your region because it would be the same everywhere; the same type of plan, the same bylaws, the same staff."

"I think at the end of the day, it will build capacity within your resources to be able to provide better data, bring forward good information to council, and build some capacity."

"You might have a bigger voice when it comes to OPP, paramedic services. You're part of a bigger group to make sure those services are being maintained and meeting the requirements for all corners of the region."

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Highlander news



TLDSB NEWS

Bill 101

TLDSB chief education officer, Wes Hahn, said it has been a summer of procedural changes to Ontario's educational system.

Through Bill 101, the Putting Student Achievement First Act, Hahn said the province has transferred responsibility for confirming all motions and resolutions at the board level from volunteer trustees to district staff. Final decisions will now be made by chief education officers like Hahn, rather than elected members of the public.

"This board has been excellent governors and policy makers, providing oversight on key issues. That will not change," Hahn said. "Motions will still be brought in at the committee level by trustees, presented to the board and approved by trustees... So, that's all staying the same."

The key difference, Hahn noted, is that school board CEOs will then have 15 days to confirm a motion or resolution or defeat it. The new rules came into effect Aug. 26.

"In some ways, there's less decision-making ability [for the board] there's no question about it. But... trustees are still in a position to hire CEOs and that is not going to change," he said. "I think this is what good governance is. Trustees govern and provide oversight, while the CEO and senior team operationalize those things."

Through the new legislation, Hahn has

also seen his job title change from 'director of education' to 'chief education officer'.

Summer learning

Superintendent Jennifer Clark said the 2026 summer learning program helped 181 students board-wide progress their literacy skills.

Open to Grade 2 students, instruction ran over three weeks July 6-24. Six schools were opened to host classes, including Stuart Baker elementary in Haliburton. Clark said participants were kids identified as needing some additional foundational literacy support by their Grade 1 teachers.

"The team utilized classroom data to identify the skills students needed help with, which allowed teachers to begin with targeted instruction the first day," Clark said.

She said every student furthered their literacy skills in some way.

"It's hard to quantify, but we have five or six students who learned some discrete speech skills – things like a short A vowel, or two letters that, together, make a distinct sound. And we had the same number of students on the other end of the scale who consolidated their foundational literacy and were working on fluency," Clark said.

"Every single child improved, so that's

very exciting. I do believe they gained confidence in their abilities, so when they enter school, they'll feel prouder of themselves," she added.

Report cards noting each student's progress was shared with their teachers for this school year, Clark added.

Nutrition in school

Communications manager, Carolynne Bull, noted TLDSB directed \$54,000 to support nutrition programs across the region during the 2025-26 school year.

She said that while most schools run their own breakfast or hot lunch program utilizing volunteers from the community, the board steps in to provide financial help whenever a request comes in.

"TLDSB schools and volunteers work hard to ensure there is equitable access to healthy food for all students," Bull said.

The federal government is part-way through a five-year commitment, made in 2024, to invest \$1 billion by 2029 to provide healthy meals to 400,000 additional students each year. More funds have been made available this month, though trustee Deb McInerney said most of the support is for schools who don't have nutrition programs already in place.

"Most of our schools will not receive

money this year," she said.

With new tariff and counter-tariff measures between Canada and the U.S. coming into effect in recent weeks, Hahn said TLDSB will continue to support struggling families where it can.

"With what's starting to happen economically, you can see the ripple effects that will start to happen across communities. Our Feed All Four and nutrition funds will be needed more than ever," Hahn said. "We hope this doesn't impact families the way it could, but we've been here to support them before and will continue to do that."

Meeting schedule

TLDSB is cutting the number of board meetings it will hold in the 2026-27 school year almost in half, from 11 gatherings to six.

"Many boards across the province are looking at how many meetings it will take to get board business done and are adjusting," Hahn said. He noted by committee meetings will be beefed up with more discussion so that issues are ready to be voted on when they come back to the board.

The next meeting is scheduled for Nov. 17 at 5:30 p.m. in Muskoka. (TLDSB briefs compiled by Mike Baker)

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Highlander news



The County is appealing a provincial decision about the 2025 ice storm. *File.*

COUNTY OF HALIBURTON NEWS

Habitat loan approved

Infrastructure Ontario has approved the County's \$15.5 million loan for Habitat for Humanity, with anticipated funding disbursement on Sept. 15.

At a Sept. 9 County council meeting, director of corporate services, Andrea Robinson, said staff are working with legal counsel and Habitat for Humanity to finalize the agreement prior to the release of funds.

Habitat for Humanity Peterborough and Kawartha Region asked Council to apply for the provincial funding, with the money to be used to bring 57 new affordable housing units to Haliburton village.

Approved at a June 24 County meeting, the loan will support construction of a 35-unit build on Peninsula Road, and the repurposing of the Haliburton Heights timeshare on Wigamog Road, creating 22 condos.

The Peninsula Road project will feature all one and two-bedroom apartments, with the Haliburton Heights timeshare comprised of six studios, six one-bedroom units and 10 two-bed units.

Fifteen of the Peninsula Road apartments will be sold to Places for People, a partner in the project, which intends to offer them for below-market rent.

Appeal ice storm costs

Staff will talk to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to appeal its decision to deny the County some of the provincial municipal ice storm assistance program (MISP) funding it applied for.

Robinson said the County incurred \$337,726 in unbudgeted costs related to the 2025 storm emergency response and clean-up.

The County submitted \$245,049 in eligible costs. The province initially approved up

to \$184,000, with an interim payment of \$64,342 received in December 2025. Robinson said following the province's detailed review, a final payment of \$46,182 was received in July 2026, bringing total provincial funding to approximately \$110,524.

However, she said \$73,263 remains unfunded with the province saying approximately \$100,000 for a Deep Bay Road culvert washout was excluded "as the province determined the damage was caused by heavy rainfall, rather than directly by the ice storm."

Robinson said staff disagree, "as the precipitation causing the culvert failure occurred during the same weather event."

She added if staff are not successful in collecting the outstanding \$73,263, it will be reflected as a write off and expensed in the current year.

Upcoming funders forum

County staff are working with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming and the Ministry of Rural Affairs to host a 'funders forum' in the Highlands in November.

Economic development staff said the event will be open to all who would like to learn more about various levels of government funding and how they might be able to access it to benefit their business, not-for-profit organization, service club, etc.

The Haliburton County 'funders forum' will follow similar events held in Peterborough County and the City of Kawartha Lakes in 2025 and 2026.

Organizers anticipate approximately two dozen funders will be represented.

The date for the Haliburton event is Nov. 5. More information will be made available to council and the public once confirmed.

(County of Haliburton news compiled by Lisa Gervais)

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To reflect and promote pride in the culture, people and landscape of The Highlands.

To encourage Highlanders to believe in themselves, in our community, and in their power to make our place in the world better every day.

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Break from tradition

It's now been almost 50 days since the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) introduced changes limiting religious references at some official military ceremonies and the backlash, if you can even call it that, has been pretty mild so far – at least locally.

On July 31, a directive was issued stripping active CAF members, volunteers, students, casual workers and contractors from using religious-specific language – including references to God – at sanctioned military events such as graduation parades, change of command ceremonies, ship commissioning, dedications for infrastructure projects, honours and awards ceremonies, seasonal mess dinners and CAF-led Remembrance Day services.

The references are, instead, to be replaced by “spiritual reflections” that focus on lessons learned, beliefs, values and experiences to inspire gratitude, remembrance, hope and integrity. The Government of Canada's words, not mine.

Initially, I thought this change was going to ruffle some feathers. There's no getting away from the fact it's a major departure from tradition. The idea, CAF said, is to foster inclusive environments for people of all beliefs, including atheists.

Reading between the lines, they don't want to force military personnel with different religious backgrounds or beliefs from being

forced to stand for the Lord's Prayer or listen to a sermon from a chaplain.

I'll be honest, I've never been the most religious person. But I question why the military felt the need to move forward with this. And I wasn't alone.

Local member of parliament, Jamie Schmale, said the changes had been in the works since October 2023 after a directive was issued to military chaplains, from the federal government, to carefully choose words that are inclusive when speaking to people, including atheists, at public events.

After speaking with veterans to gauge where people stood, Schmale said many spoke passionately on the issue – “there are no atheists in a foxhole,” is what he was told.

It was a similar message from Glenn Woods, the Royal Canadian Legion's veterans' service officer for the zone, who said he and other veterans from the County and Kawartha Lakes wanted to stick with tradition.

I did some asking around myself on this topic and found the response to be pretty underwhelming. A lot of the veterans I approached had no idea this change had happened, but, more than that, a few asked me why it mattered. I got similar feedback when broaching the issue with folks at the Kinmount Fair a couple of weekends ago.

Harry Morgan, minister for the Haliburton Pastoral Charge, disagreed with the move but almost felt it was inevitable given how minimal a

role religion plays in many people's lives today. Things are different now than they were 50-100 years ago, he said.

The switch may be noticeable for those who tune into national Remembrance Day observances, or routinely attend official military ceremonies, but for most, the impact will be nil. This won't change how local-level ceremonies are run on Nov. 11.

Given how few people were aware of this, I do think CAF and the government could have done a better job getting the word out. I spoke to leaders from three legions in the County and Kawartha Lakes, who said they weren't given a heads up on this from central command.

I tend to agree. At the very least, legions should have gotten some advance notice. Maybe this is something veterans and active service members could have voted on.

CAF and the feds may be proven right in that this is, essentially, a nothing burger. But it could have been handled better.



By Mike Baker

LETTERS

Misinformation has real consequences

Dear editor,

The persistent degradation and demonization of health sciences on social media is as alarming as it is effective.

It shows just how easily public perception can be manipulated into denying clear, objective reality.

We need only look at the stark statistics to see the undeniable positive impact of public health.

Over the last 100-150 years, health science has fundamentally transformed human survival. Clean water, modern sanitation, prenatal care, antibiotics, and the rollout of mass immunization programs beginning in the mid-20th century have delivered unprecedented longevity.

In Canada, child mortality (under five): historically, up to 30 per cent of children died before their fifth birthday. Today, child mortality stands at 0.5 per cent.

In the early 1920s, Canadian life expectancy was 58.1 years for women and 56 for men. By the 2020s, those figures rose to 83.8 for women and 79.2 for men—meaning we now live roughly 24 years longer, on average, than our grandparents did.

Those of us from older generations who have lived through this long arc of time have witnessed firsthand how dreaded, life-threatening diseases vanished from daily life thanks to scientific progress. Modern public health isn't a matter of opinion—it is the very infrastructure that allowed most of us to live long enough to debate it.

I'm exhausted by the constant online chatter framing health-care professionals as conspirators rather than public servants. It's easy to dismiss modern medicine from behind a keyboard, but rhetoric quickly falls apart when real health crises hit.

We need look no further than Apple co-founder Steve Jobs, who initially rejected evidence-based medicine to treat his cancer with alternative diets and juice fasts for nine months. By the time

he admitted juice fasts could not stop a tumour, it was too late for modern science to save his life. Misinformation isn't just harmless opinion—it has real, irreversible consequences.

Armin Weber
Eagle Lake

Vaccine facts

Dear editor,

First off, a big thank you to Dr. Nell Thomas for her voice of reason and science in a sea of misinformation about vaccines in general, and the COVID-19 vaccine in particular.

When it comes to the positive effects of vaccine uptake, the proof is in the pudding.

Canada's record of preventing COVID deaths is outstanding, though not as good as Australia and New Zealand, whose strict measures resulted in fewer than 1,000 deaths per million of population.



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THIS WEEK:

Meet Highlands East Mayoral Candidate
Krystle Anne Pegg



Editorial opinion

LETTERS

Our rate of 1,424 per million was far better than most other countries', notably the U.S. with 3,626 per million, as well as the U.K. (3,404) and the European Union (2,834).

Within Canada, the provinces with the lowest rates of vaccine uptake, Alberta and Saskatchewan, suffered the highest death rates.

Especially dramatic was the case within the U.S., where the least vaccinated state, Mississippi, had three times the deaths per capita as the most vaccinated state, Vermont.

(Statistics are from Our World in Data, Statistics Canada, and the U.S. National Institute of Health).

With the municipal election season upon us, we should beware of the risks posed by science-deniers running for public office in our County.

Tom Needham
Lake Kashagawigamog

Much more than 'anti-vaccine'

Dear editor,

What happened during the pandemic is much bigger than "anti-vaccine."

That the vaccine saved 'millions of lives' is a computer modelling study that showed 2.5 million people may have been saved where 90 per cent were over 60 years old. Adults and children never needed the vaccine.

Why was it made mandatory? Why did people lose their jobs and be labelled 'anti-vaccine' when there should have been a choice, considering the low effectiveness of the mRNA shots?

Why were restaurants and small mom and pop shops closed when big box stores were left open?

It was known the mRNA shots were ineffective for the variants and the virus was flu-like. And still all the restrictions stayed in place for people who could see there was something misleading about the dangers of a 'deadly virus.' Most people recovered fully - and there was an identifiable population for which the virus was serious or deadly, over 60 and with underlying morbidities.

Also, there were treatment protocols available that were 'demonized' for the sole purpose of approving the emergency use of mRNA shots, which never would have been granted if it was acknowledged that the virus could be treated by other means.

There were many deaths and illnesses

from heart problems for young people that never needed the shots. Young people lost important years of schooling, suffered depression and isolation due to social distancing policies that were never necessary. I could go on but I hope the bigger picture is now being seen very clearly that much more happened during the pandemic for which answers are needed.

And let's not forget the elephant in the room that there is The Allison inquiry going on in Ottawa with multiple sworn testimonies of Canadians that were vaccine-damaged, and from relatives testifying for loved ones that died from the shots.

Darlene Buckingham
Tory Hill

Editor's note: Over four days in Ottawa, Conservative MP Dean Allison held independent hearings into COVID-19 vaccine injuries.

Crown land and taxes

Dear editor,

I've attended a few of the meetings held in Wilberforce this summer where high taxes were mentioned more than anything else.

I stood up and mentioned about all of the Crown land that is in the County. After the meeting, I had many people come up to me to tell me that they weren't aware of this and wanted more information.

I told them Haliburton County has the most Crown land in this part of Ontario with more than 50 per cent that we get no taxes from, including the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust land, and cannot be purchased for development etc.

Don Outram
Tory Hill

Who's trash-talking who?

Dear editor,

In the otherwise commendable article entitled 'Canada-U.S. trade war hits close to home', *The Highlander*, Sept. 10, Lorne Heise is quoted as saying, "I don't trash you. I don't criticize you and don't say bad things about you."

Assuming he is quoted correctly and accurately, this is a reasonable proposition. Don't expect to make a deal if you trash talk the other side.

However, in the context of the article with its sub headings 'Stop 'talking trash

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Debbie Irvine enjoyed seeing several Ruby-throated Hummingbirds visiting her feeders throughout the season. She got a real kick out of this one who just loved resting on her lawn chair on the deck.

about the U.S." and 'Treat the US better', Mr. Heise seems to be suggesting that Canadians somehow initiated the trash talk. I would ask Mr. Heise, and others who share that view, to take a look at U.S. president Donald Trump's Truth Social account and ask a rather simple question: Who is trash talking whom?

More than 80 per cent of Canadians have rightly concluded that the current trade talks' fiasco was initiated by one person and one person only. Six years ago, Trump signed the Canada-United State-Mexico Agreement, which replaced NAFTA, and which he called the "greatest trade

agreement in history." Today, he has chosen to create chaos and confusion across North America, making it extraordinarily difficult for business people in the Highlands and elsewhere to make rational, long-term business decisions.

Blaming Canada and Canadians for 'trash talking' in these circumstances is a little like blaming the guy who got sucker punched for having his chin in the way of somebody else's fist.

Carolyn Dartnell
Maple Lake

Correction: In the Sept. 10 edition of *The Highlander*, in our election Q&As with 2026 municipal council candidates, we published an incorrect response attributed to Dysart et al Ward 5 candidate Barry Boice regarding what he sees as the township's biggest challenge. What ran was a response to the same question by Minden Hills Ward 3 candidate, Bob Sisson, published on Sept. 3. We apologize for the error and are publishing Boice's correct response here, as well as his thoughts on amalgamation.

Dysart et al Ward 5 candidate Barry Boice

Question: What do you think is the biggest issue in your township and how would you go about tackling it?

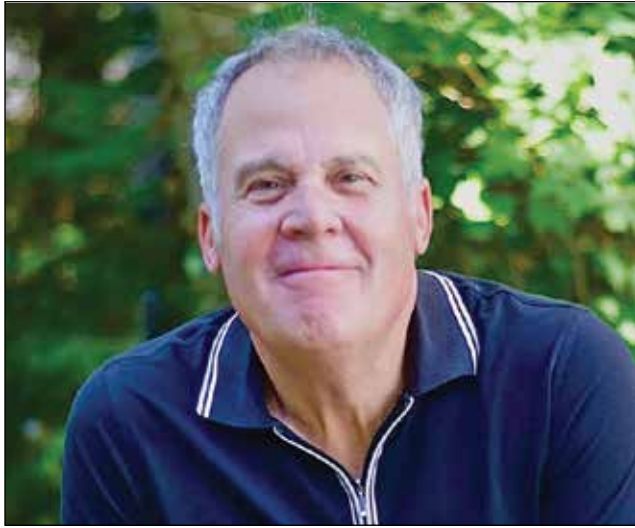
Answer: In my opinion, the biggest issue facing the council in the near future is the expansion of the sewage treatment facility. It is critical for any future development of Dysart. Our future council, whomever it may be, has to prioritize this and, of course, find a way to finance it. Infrastructure in general, including the roads and bridges, have to be prioritized. It all begins with the sewage treatment facility.

Question: What's your position on amalgamation?

Answer: One-tiered governance in Haliburton County is quickly becoming one of the biggest issues, if not the biggest, in Dysart. We have to look at anything that can possibly save us money, but at the same time maintain our services. In saying that, I feel I have not yet received the information I need to make a decision on such an impactful issue. I look forward to receiving the upcoming information and making my decision based on the best interests for the Dysart taxpayers.



ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS



Ward 3 | Don Embree

Q: What are your qualifications to run for council?

A: I bring both a deep connection to Algonquin Highlands and a career built around listening, problem-solving and bringing people together.

I spent my career as a creative director in advertising, where I learned to listen carefully, understand different perspectives, manage competing priorities and find practical solutions. Since retiring and spending my time year-round in Algonquin Highlands, I have become increasingly involved in our community.

I believe a good councillor doesn't need to have all the answers. They need to do their homework, ask good questions, listen to residents and staff, and make thoughtful decisions based on the best information available.

That is the approach I would bring to council: listen, ask tough questions, respect taxpayers' dollars and work hard to represent all of Ward 3.

Q: What is your vision for the future of Algonquin Highlands and how would you bring that about?

A: My vision is for Algonquin Highlands to remain the special place we value today while planning responsibly for the future.

That means protecting our natural environment; supporting local businesses and a strong year-round community; providing good municipal services; and ensuring decisions are responsible and affordable for taxpayers.

We also need to recognize that change is coming. Costs are increasing and municipalities face important decisions about services and how local government is organized.

I would approach those decisions by listening first, looking carefully at the evidence and asking what will provide the best long-term value for residents. I don't believe change should happen simply for the sake of change. But where there are better, more efficient ways of doing things, we should be prepared to consider them.

Above all, residents need to have a meaningful voice in decisions about their community, and I am prepared to ensure they have that.

Q: What do you think is the biggest issue in your township and how would you tackle it?

A: I believe the biggest challenge facing Algonquin Highlands is maintaining the services and community we value while keeping municipal government affordable for taxpayers.

The County's recent "Affordability and Governance Structure Study" makes clear that municipalities are facing rising costs and significant financial pressures in the years ahead. That means the next council will have some important decisions to make.

I would start by asking straightforward questions about how we can be delivering services in the most effective and affordable way possible.

The governance study presents different options for how municipal government could be organized. I think we need to examine those options carefully, understand the costs and benefits, and most importantly listen to residents before making decisions.

My priority would be better value for taxpayers — finding efficiencies and opportunities to work together while protecting the local services, community identity and natural environment that make Algonquin Highlands special.



Ward 3 | Darren Wiebe

Q: What are your qualifications to run for council?

A: Having deep appreciation and respect for lake country and the people are fundamental to running for council. I first formulated this mindset in my younger years at the family camp in Lake of the Woods, Northwestern Ontario. I took those experiences and have molded them into my personal cottage life.

Before becoming an owner, I used to rent a cottage seasonally in different Haliburton County locations. I would take road trips up Hwy. 35 to 60 exploring the rolling topography. It didn't take long to know that I wanted to own in Algonquin Highlands.

Therein, I made a lifestyle decision. I knew the granite, the towering pines and the lake. I am into my fourth year as lake steward spearheading the Lake Partner Program on behalf of Fletcher Lake residents, specifically and Algonquin Highlands residents, generally. Fletcher Lake is my community. It and the other lakes connect all residents alike.

Q: What is your vision for the future of Algonquin Highlands, and how would you bring that about?

A: Years ago, I was in a running group and chatting with a fellow runner about cottage life. She explained that her family had a mainland spot and an island spot on Lake Joseph in Muskoka County.

I had only heard about the prominence of Lake Jo, so I assumed it was as glorious as it sounded. I had recently purchased my spot on Fletcher Lake, and I told her so. She hesitated, let out a semi-exasperated ahh and replied, "That's where I want to be." I found her reply to be perplexing given her arguably admirable situation. So, I asked her why. And she explained, "because on a clear night, you can see the milky way."

It is my hope that future generations at least get the opportunity to feel that natural essence. This would involve education, communication, fiscal prudence and smart policy of which I'd play a part.

Q: What do you think is the biggest issue in your township, and how would you tackle it?

A: The residents of Haliburton County, including Algonquin Highlands, have come to diverging pathways in the road as encapsulated in the affordability and governance report. The commissioning of the study that led to the report provides proof that change at least needs to be looked at. I have no doubt that the report and all of its moving dimensions will take up much of council's time over the next term.

I would welcome the opportunity to work with fellow councillors, constituents and other stakeholders to bring about fiscal prudence and responsible change.

I would also look forward to tackling a range of Algonquin Highlands issues absent any conflict of interest. I am not a local business owner, and I am not looking to flip properties. I am solely and purely a seasonal cottage owner with a deep affection for Algonquin Highlands and a lifestyle that is a natural therapeutic gift.



Ward 2 | Lisa Barry

Q: What are your qualifications to run for council?

A: I manage a successful home-based business, and will always be an advocate for my community, my children and my parents and their evolving needs.

I am a local artist and active member of our arts, culture and education community. I bring four terms of experience to Algonquin Highlands with a long-standing commitment to our community. I understand the opportunities and challenges ahead, both locally and within a broader context.

One of my greatest qualifications is my approach to governance: I listen, ask questions and consider the long-term impacts and weigh how difficult choices serve the best interests of the community.

I have been involved in a broad portfolio of planning studies, zoning bylaws, and economic development strategies. I am well-versed in committee work and community partnerships, having a strong working relationship with municipal staff and understand the budget process and fiscal responsibility that comes with serving in elected office.

Q: What is your vision for Algonquin Highlands — and how would you bring that about?

A: If successful in this election and if the incoming council supports me, it is my intention to seek appointment for a County leadership role as deputy mayor and take on a greater leadership role.

I would like to contribute to advancing support for housing, health and social services across the County.

Regarding a vision specifically for Algonquin Highlands, I would like it to remain a strong identity that can live within its means while continuing building reserves, increasing revenues and streamlining services where it makes sense. We need to consider economic development opportunities and develop ways to uniquely leverage our tourism approach while maintaining consideration of our environment.

I want Algonquin Highlands responsible approach today to allow for a more sustainable community in the future.

Q: What do you think is the biggest issue in your township and how would you go about tackling it?

A: The largest issue is the governance study. I believe the service delivery review and governance study are good beginning frameworks for our next steps.

Change is needed in consolidating and finding efficiencies within some services, reducing the tax burden and reshaping objectively how our County operates. Keeping Algonquin Highlands as an active voice and preserving the community identity is my intent as an elected official.

The municipality needs to continue investing in our existing infrastructure such as buildings, docks and landings. We need to remain fiscally responsible with capital projects and continue keeping our asset management in order.

The licence of occupation bylaw will likely be an issue this coming term. I am open to revisiting this bylaw as well as the shoreline preservation bylaw. Both have been developed over the past term and as time passes and perspectives change, council should be willing to make improvements where warranted.

ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS



Ward 2 | James Cooper

Q: What are your qualifications to run for council?

A: As a seasoned information technology sales professional, I have sold multi-million-dollar enterprise deals to some of the largest corporations in the world. My background allows me to bring proven leadership, fiscal responsibility, and creative problem-solving to the Algonquin Highlands council.

Given the state of the global economy and how its effect is filtering down to our municipalities, your representative on council needs the strong business and financial background that I can bring to meet the new economic realities we are facing. I will bring fresh ideas and critical thinking about how our tax dollars are utilized and to the challenges that continue to be persistent in Algonquin Highlands.

For the last four years I have been continuously monitoring our existing council's activities and advocating for issues across the County. I believe everyone needs a voice in our township's decisions, and I would like to be that voice for you.

Q: What is your vision for Algonquin Highlands – and how would you bring that about?

A: As we continue with amalgamation discussions, I intend to make sure the needs of Algonquin Highlands are being fully considered. Before committing, we need to fully review and approve any detailed project plan that will result in the best possible outcome for our township.

I want to look for ways to address the persistent problem of affordable housing by going back to front-line organizations like Places for People, contractors, and realtors to try to resolve the issues that are hampering their efforts. We need a township that is transparent, keeping residents informed and engaged in current and future governance related to bylaws and projects.

We may not be able to please everyone, but at the very least I intend to let them know the reasoning behind any decisions that are made. Let's create a township that feels more like an open book rather than a fortress.

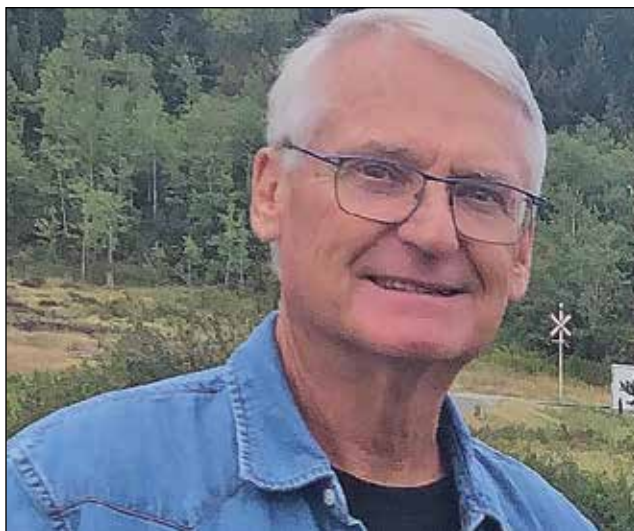
Q: What do you think is the biggest issue in your township and how would you go about tackling it?

A: Amalgamation is the biggest issue that Algonquin Highlands is facing right now, and I'm concerned about merging into a one-tier system.

If amalgamation happens, our township will become an outlier community in a newly-merged County. I worry that any new economic developments and growth opportunities will be directed towards the towns of Haliburton and Minden, which currently have the business infrastructure to support it.

Most services will be centralized into these hubs, leaving Algonquin Highlands possibly underserved. I believe we need to take a more cautious approach, by continuing to identify and merge duplicate services where appropriate. We can start to standardize bylaws, policies and procedures across the County to ensure best practices are adhered to.

Amalgamation is a complex and multi-faceted process to implement, and we need to ensure that all our communities are best served by it.



Ward 2 | Gary Trapp

Q: What are your qualifications to run for council?

A: I come from a highly-regulated financial services sector in Toronto, having held senior roles leading both large operational teams and small, highly-specialized financial teams. This included recruiting and building customer-focused teams.

I worked within a corporate governance model reporting and presenting to senior executives. Recently, I was part of a team creating a not-for-profit governance bylaw for compliance with new provincial regulations. I've served as chair and board member for not-for-profit organizations and have been actively monitoring the Algonquin Highlands municipal council meetings over the past few years.

My career began in public accounting as a CPA in a wide array of environments. I believe I bring a broad leadership perspective and sound judgement as we navigate our economic and service delivery challenges with fiscal responsibility.

Q: What is your vision for Algonquin Highlands – and how would you bring that about?

A: My vision is about people – our community, council and municipal staff, working together in an environment grounded in trust, respect and co-operation.

Council would foster genuine partnership, valuing cottagers and permanent residents equally and welcoming input with, "yes, let's see how we can make that work." A healthy council would encourage open debate, independent voices and respectful disagreement, while engaging residents through honest communication, accessible forums, meaningful consultation and clear explanations of how their input shapes decision.

Our community would feel connected – to one another and to their elected representatives – and believe participation matters because their voices are reflected in council's decisions.

Municipal staff would be supported by a co-operative council-administration relationship that fosters a professional, positive, high-functioning workplace where employees want to join and stay.

Imagine what our community could become with great leadership – if we want it badly enough.

Q: What do you think is the biggest issue in your township and how would you go about tackling it?

A: Many are debating the 'what' – to amalgamate or not – trying to predict outcomes. Amalgamating four municipalities and a County into a single-tier is far more complex than a corporate merger and demands broader, deeper analysis.

The status quo is unsustainable and change inevitable. But 'when' should be irreversible, long-term decisions be made? Consider some facts: not all audited financial statements have been completed. Corporate mergers would view this as essential. Don't taxpayers deserve the same diligence? Fiscal responsibility for the past four years is vital; key analysis, including the EORN report, is still in its infancy; public awareness is limited, one week of presentations is insufficient; and new councils need time to assess risks before making irreversible, long-term decisions.

First, let's get our respective township houses in order. Those opportunities go beyond financial. And consider, who is pushing for a rushed amalgamation decision? Are we acting like a healthy democracy.



Ward 2 | Kent Wallace

Q: What are your qualifications to run for council?

A: I bring more than 20 years of business and leadership experience. I spent over 12 years as VP of marketing and later co-owner of a Mississauga business, followed by senior leadership roles in waste management and environmental services, including director of business development.

Throughout my career, I've been responsible for managing and growing multimillion-dollar lines of business, improving service and being accountable for results. I also have extensive hands-on experience managing properties, contractors, renovations and day-to-day operations.

I'm not a career politician. I'm a problem-solver who believes in doing the homework, asking questions and listening before making decisions. Council is entrusted with taxpayers' money and decisions that affect people's homes, businesses and livelihoods. I would bring practical decision-making and accountability to that responsibility while ensuring both permanent and seasonal residents have a strong voice.

Q: What is your vision for Algonquin Highlands – and how would you bring that about?

A: My vision is to preserve what makes Algonquin Highlands special while making municipal government more efficient, accountable and responsive to the people it serves.

We can protect our lakes, rural character and local identity while still looking for better ways to deliver services and spend taxpayers' money. I want decisions to be based on evidence, measurable results and genuine consultation with residents.

I believe we should look for opportunities to share services, equipment and resources with neighbouring municipalities where doing so eliminates duplication, improves service or saves money. At the same time, I believe strongly in maintaining our local voice.

I would bring an open mind to council, ask questions and work collaboratively with other councillors, staff and residents. Good ideas don't belong to one person or one side. My goal would be practical solutions that serve permanent residents, seasonal residents and future generations.

Q: What do you think is the biggest issue in your township and how would you go about tackling it?

A: I believe one of our biggest challenges is maintaining affordability and financial sustainability while protecting the services and local representation residents value.

The current governance discussion makes that especially important. I have real concerns about full amalgamation and what it could mean for Algonquin Highlands' local voice. However, I'm not opposed to change simply for the sake of preserving the status quo.

Before supporting any major restructuring, I want to see the numbers. What will it cost? What will it actually save? Will services improve? What happens to local representation, assets and reserves?

If sharing services or resources eliminates duplication and saves taxpayers money, I'm absolutely open to it. But sharing services and eliminating local representation are two very different things.

My approach is simple: keep what works locally, be efficient where it counts, and protect our local voice.



Trustee Kinga Baricz

Q: We've noticed school board trustees do not have a lot of autonomy - things are controlled tightly by the school board. How would you operate in this environment to be accountable to parents and students?

A: My role as a trustee is to be accountable to parents; using my limited role to build bridges, foster transparency, and represent the community.

Transparency and honest communication are crucial. Parents need to know about the processes, not just the results. Families need to have information about what falls

under the school board authority and what I represent. This process will strengthen relationships and build trust.

My plan would include regular hours to meet with families so I can bring concrete community input to board meetings. Using parents' voices as a sounding-board and advocating for common shared goals of their children's education and well-being. We all want the best for our children. They deserve a united community behind them. The only way that can happen is if we close the gaps between home, schools and community. That requires strong teamwork, present adults, and the will for change.

Q: This bussing policy is still in effect in Haliburton County. Can anything be done about it?

A: Under Ontario's Education Act, children have the right to access public education. In rural communities like Haliburton County, families face many challenges, however transportation is an equity barrier. The school bus is an essential public service and the only transportation to school. A policy that cuts off bus access for families, cuts the children off of their education.

Based on my experience living in this County for over 20 years, our County lacks sidewalks and safe walking paths along rural highways. If a child loses access to a bus, then it's almost impossible to get to school safely.

For safety reasons, we need some change in bussing policies to protect children's safety. Our bussing policy must reflect the reality of our roads. Again, I stress the importance of working together as a strong community, to stand up and advocate for our children's safety and well-being.

Q: What would you do when it comes to violence in the classroom?

A: We, as adults, are responsible for supporting children; to model, have a calm presence, and provide predictable spaces where children feel safe to learn without fear or

harsh punishment.

Educators and parents must align as reflective non-judgmental partners, continually adapting to children's needs. Parents are their children's experts. We don't fix children. We fix the environment around them. Respecting children as active participants by involving them in collaborative problem-solving, decision-making, and setting expectations.

When we view children through these lenses, our shared mission as educators, and parents transforms from controlling behaviour to building capacity. Children's mental health reflects the environment, culture, and systems we create for them.

Advocacy for systematic support should be a priority. When parents and educators are burnt out, who do you think feels it the most? Children. Embedded in school systems should be health, mental health, and the required support for children, educators and families.

Q: What is an issue you think needs addressing?

A: The most important issue is communication gap between schools, families, communities, and systematic pressures on both sides. This creates an environment where children lack unified support. I see daily how easy it is to pinpoint what isn't working. It is human nature to find problems. But true progress requires adults to shift our focus from reacting to challenges to proactively building solutions together. This means having a system where we support needs before they become crises.

We need to invest in children's mental health, training support for educators, families and fostering transparent communication between parents, teachers and the school board. When we choose to be proactive, we won't need to put out fires. We can't find solutions alone, it requires partnerships. When we build a community based on strength, it's easier to collectively solve problems.



Trustee Victoria Hillier-Hutchinson

Q: We've noticed school board trustees do not have a lot of autonomy - things are controlled tightly by the board. How would you operate in this environment to be accountable to parents and students?

A: As a senior public sector administrator, I have reported directly to boards and councils for nearly a decade and understand the relationships and responsibilities of board members. Trustees must educate themselves on issues, engage with school communities, and advocate for the needs of those they represent. Each trustee has their own voice, but once the board makes a decision, trustees

have a responsibility to support it.

I would use my voice to represent the needs of school communities in Haliburton County and clearly communicate board discussions and decisions.

As a parent of children attending local schools, I have a direct and personal connection to the decisions made by the board and the future of public education in our community.

I understand the importance of strong rural advocacy and ensuring students, staff, and families have the support needed to achieve the best possible educational and well-being outcomes.

Q: This bussing policy is still in effect in Haliburton County. Can anything be done about it?

A: From my understanding, the policy being enforced was approved years ago and includes exceptions based on hazards. The issue I see is that while the board has said its application is an administrative decision, the board ultimately governs the policy that administration is responsible for applying.

If I were on the board, I would immediately request a review of the policy. I would ask what constitutes a hazard and whether clearer criteria should be established for exceptions. The board could develop a framework to accompany the policy and then reevaluate its impact on students in identified hazard areas.

As someone with experience developing and reviewing policy, I understand the distinction between governance and administration. Trustees should not administer policy, but they can ensure policies provide clear direction. I would work with the board to develop a policy that prioritizes student safety while giving administration clear criteria to apply it consistently.

Q: What would you do when it comes to violence in the classroom?

A: I would start by understanding the extent of student violence in our schools and specifically how schools in

Haliburton County are being impacted. What are the risks and impacts on our staff and other students? What policies and reporting mechanisms are already in place, and are they working as intended?

I would communicate with union leadership and engage school administrators to understand the real-life application of our procedures and the challenges they are facing.

Many of these incidents occur in the primary grades and are often connected to students with significant needs and a lack of adequate resources. As a trustee, I would advocate for resources where they are needed, lobby the province for greater funding, ensure our policies are effective and applied appropriately, and ensure our school communities are informed about the work being done to address these concerns.

Q: What is an issue you think needs addressing?

A: One of the biggest issues we need to address is ensuring rural students have the same opportunities to succeed as students anywhere else in Ontario.

I grew up in Haliburton County, graduated from our local schools, and now have children who will do the same. I care deeply about the success of our students and our schools.

As a former school board administrator, and parent council advisor, I understand the realities of rural education and the challenge of balancing educational priorities with financial decisions. I bring business knowledge, experience with provincial funding and ministry relationships, and a passion for improving systems to create positive outcomes.

As trustee, I will advocate to ensure rural students are not left behind, that our policies and resources reflect their needs, and that we improve transparency and communication so our school communities understand what is happening at the board and have opportunities to be heard.

Editor's note: We are continuing our municipal election coverage this week with contenders for Algonquin Highlands' Ward 2 and 3. The Ward 1 candidate, Karla McKay, was acclaimed. We asked each candidate the same three questions and gave them a maximum of 150 words to respond to each query. We also requested photos.

We also sent questions to candidates for the Trillium Lakelands District School Board. Their answers can be found above.

Next week: Highlands East.

King is having a 15th anniversary customer appreciation event/celebration on Saturday, Sept. 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. "I do have amazing customers," she said. Visit pinereflections.ca or follow along on social media at [@pinereflections](https://twitter.com/pinereflections)







3 Ways to Vote!

October 10-26, 2026

705-286-1260 ext 585
elections@mindenhills.ca
www.mindenhills.ca/election

Online/Telephone

October 10 - 26

- Vote online or by telephone any time between October 10 at 8:00 a.m. and October 26 at 8:00 p.m.
- An internet voting station will be available at the Administration Office (7 Milne St.) during Voter Information Centre hours, excluding Voting Days.
- On Voting Days (October 10 & 26), an internet voting station will be available at the S.G. Nesbitt Community Centre (55 Parkside St., upper level)
- A unique PIN found on your Voter Information Letter will be used for these methods of voting, along with your birth date.

Paper Ballot

October 10 & 26 only

At the S.G. Nesbitt
Community Centre
(55 Parkside St., upper level) on:

- **Advanced Voting Day:** October 10, 2026
10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Voting Day:** October 26, 2026
10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Please bring your Voter Information Letter, a piece of ID, and proof of qualifying address (if not on your ID).

Voter Information Letters

Voter information letters will be mailed (mid/late) September. If you lose your Voter Information Letter, do not receive it in the mail by the end of September, or do not have access to it, please contact the Clerks Department.

A Voter Information Letter is required for all methods of voting.

Are You on the Voters List?

To confirm if you are on the Voters List, please contact the Township of Minden Hills Election Team at 705-286-1260 ext 585 or email elections@mindenhills.ca

Applications for revisions to the Voters List are available at the Municipal office at 7 Milne Street (first floor).

Need Help?

Visit the Voter Information Centre during the below hours, or at the S.G. Nesbitt Community Centre on Advanced Voting Day and Voting Day.

Municipal Office: 7 Milne St, first floor.

- Monday, Wednesday - Friday:
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesdays Sept 1 - Oct 20:
8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers: 7 Milne St, large double doors

- September 12th, 19th, and 26th :
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Highlander people



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Harcourt's Jocelyn Donaldson, far right, competed for Team Canada. Submitted.



Compassionate Hearts
Community Cancer Support Circle

INFORMATION SESSION

Learn about:

- Cancer & Caregiver Circles
- Community Support Services
- Palliative Care Community Team

THURS., SEPT. 17
1:00-2:15 P.M.

All are welcome to stay for support circles until 3:00 P.M.

WEST GUILFORD RECREATION CENTRE
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RSVP or For More Information
Ashley: hhhshospice@hhhs.ca
Barb: barb@brooksong.ca




Harcourt world appearance

By Mike Baker

For Jocelyn Donaldson, there's no greater thrill or honour than representing her country on the global stage.

The Harcourt-based equestrian competed for Team Canada at the 2026 International Mounted Games Association (IMGA) 2026 World Team Championships, in France Aug. 10-16. She was one of five Canadian riders, which Donaldson said is the pinnacle of the mounted games circuit – an extreme form of horse racing.

"The mounted games is a series of military-based tactical relay races played on horseback," Donaldson said. "Riders have to be comfortable racing at a canter or a gallop and be prepared to lean or even jump off the horses to retrieve different items in motion. It's very competitive."

Mounted games were originally inspired by Prince Philip, with the first event in London in 1957. He introduced the games via the Canadian Pony Club, which runs competition in dressage, showjumping, eventing and mounted games.

Tryouts for the national team were held in Newmarket last October, with Donaldson making the squad alongside one of her best friends, Karen Foell. That made the experience even better, Donaldson said.

The first two days were spent learning the course and developing relationships with the ponies they'd be riding.

Because it was overseas, Donaldson said it would have cost more than \$10,000 to ship each rider's personal horse. After that, it was four days of racing.

Donaldson had a far-from-ideal start, saying she wasn't a match for her first pony and had to quickly bond with a second.

"We're really relying on them to keep us safe, so there has to be a lot of trust built up very quickly," she said.

The Canadians were one of 13 countries competing. Team Canada finished fourth in the 'B' finals, or consolation bracket.

With a second worlds appearance under her belt, Donaldson said she's not sure she'll pursue a third – wanting to focus on training the next generation of riders. She said she's working with three young equestrians looking to get involved in the mounted games.

"Mounted games exist in Canada right now, but at a very small level. It's a bigger thing in the U.S. and definitely Europe, so it'd be great to get this out there more, because I feel like people have no idea," Donaldson said.

Next up for her is an appearance at a national event in Ocala, Florida in October, where she'll be taking her 14-year-old Arabian horse, Darsha. She's doing some fundraising to help get there, including raffles.



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cordially invites you to our

41st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At The Link, Haliburton
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Thursday, October 1st

1:00PM
Annual General Meeting

2:00PM
Mix & Mingle

RSVP via email: ebarlow@haliburtoncdc.ca
or Call: 705-457-3555

Canada

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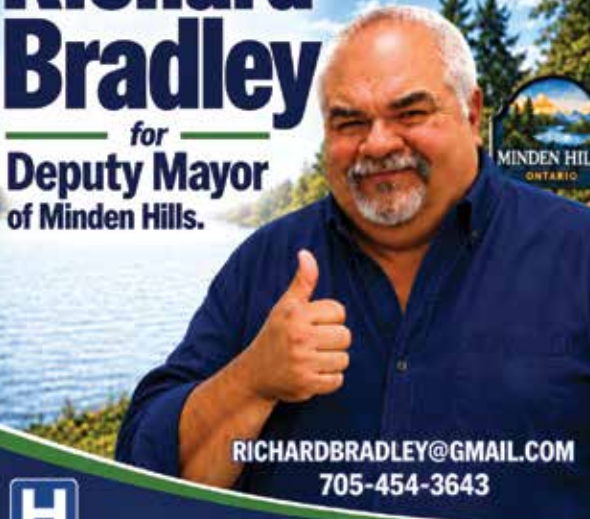
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H Your choice for an **INDEPENDENT VOICE**

Singing song of hope for chronically ill

By Mike Baker

It was exactly a decade ago when Otter Lake cottager, Lisa Lauter, started to suffer from immense fatigue, brain fog and sudden bouts of nausea that she believed were symptoms of living a busy life as a full-time nurse and mom to three preteen boys.

Not thinking or knowing there was anything seriously wrong, Lauter soldiered on until, one day in the summer of 2017, she suffered a rare tonic-clonic seizure on the dock of her Dorset property.

"That changed everything," Lauter said, noting she became obsessed with finding out what was going on. Testing was done in Huntsville and Barrie before Lauter returned to her then-home in Houston, Texas searching for more answers. She got a formal diagnosis of autoimmune encephalitis in February 2018.

The Mayo Clinic describes the affliction as a group of conditions that causes swelling in the brain. This usually happens because the immune system mistakenly attacks brain cells. Other symptoms include memory loss and changes in thinking and behaviour.

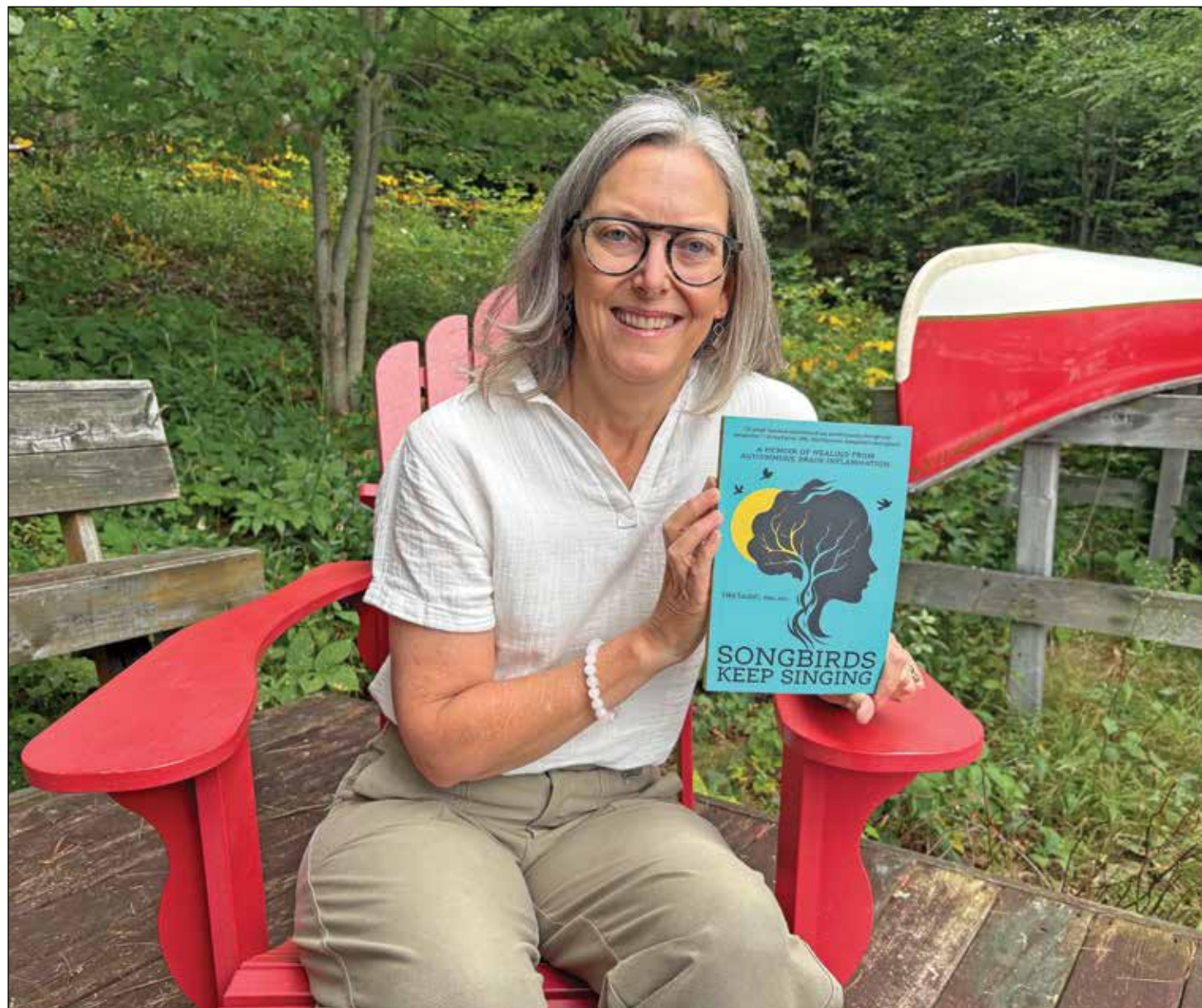
The scary thing about autoimmune encephalitis, Lauter said, is that experts don't know what causes it. For some, it can be triggered by certain cancers or infections, or medicines for others. People with an existing autoimmune disease or a family history of them may be more likely to contract it.

Such was the information overload Lauter put herself through following her diagnosis, she now considers herself a rare patient-expert hybrid. She has written a book, *Songbirds Keep Singing: A Memoir of Healing from Autoimmune Brain Inflammation*, outlining her journey through diagnosis and recovery. It was published in July.

"It was very hard for me to navigate the system and find out what I needed in terms of treatment and what I could do. That was a big motivator for me to write the book – to raise awareness," Lauter said. "I think there's a lot in my book and my story that could be helpful to other people facing chronic illness."

The book took her about four years to write and isn't like your typical guide, Lauter said.

"I'm very careful not to be prescriptive, because every case is so individual. What I



Lisa Lauter's book *Songbirds Keep Singing* covers her years-long journey battling autoimmune encephalitis. Photo submitted.

tried to do was write it in a way that gives people ideas of what they can ask for, advocate for, different strategies they could consider adopting for their overall health, things they could ask their doctor. I'm also just very real about my story and the obstacles I faced," she said.

For example, feeling a strange numbness and tingling sensation around her forehead and under her eyes, sleeping up to 20 hours on her bad days, and losing cognitive function.

It was a long road to recover for Lauter

– one that continues now. Since her 2018 diagnosis, Lauter said she's completed rehabilitative, physical, occupational, aquatic, vision and vestibular therapies, while also changing her diet and adopting a more positive mindset. It was a strenuous first 18 months, but the results, she said, have been spectacular.

"As I write about in the book, I never thought I wouldn't get better. Just having a strong determination to do everything you can to recover, I think, is half the battle," Lauter said.

Now living in Nelson, British Columbia for most of the year, Lauter said she still spends summers in the Highlands – only recently returning home. She launched the book in an event at the Dwight Public Library Aug. 25.

Learn more about Lauter's story at www.lisalauter.com. Her book can be ordered online at Indigo.ca or in-person at Cedar Canoe Books in Huntsville and Bracebridge.

ColourFest

Free family fun in Head Lake Park!

Head Lake Park, Haliburton

Saturday, September 19, 2026

11 AM to 3 PM

Pumpkin Rolling Contest
 Rotary Club of Haliburton
12 - 1:45PM: Register & pick your free pumpkin
2PM: Rolling contest starts on York St

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Haliburton Highlands Time Travellers

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Local Groups & Businesses

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Pockets the Face Painter

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www.dysartetel.ca/colourfest

Highlander events

ADVERTORIAL

Why I turned down a job with great soil

A few weeks ago, I went to visit a beautifully landscaped property just outside the County. It was a new cottage and it was surrounded by large, flat patios and big beds for planting. The landscaper had done a terrific job.

The area was ready to plant, with about a foot of dark, rich soil in each of the beds. As I usually do, I took a soil sample and sent it to the lab. The levels of nitrogen and other nutrients in the soil were sky-high – unlike the results from local soil I normally get. The beds were likely filled with triple mix or some other amended soil.

The client didn't want a dense planting. Instead, she wanted the plants spaced out, without lots of leaves and stems at their bases.

I turned down this large project. Without replacing all the soil, I just couldn't achieve the kind of results the client wanted.

All about the soil

It was the soil that settled the question. When a plant ends up in super-fertile soil, it's going to grow like crazy. Not just the plants I add, but any weed seeds that find their way in. So the only way to make the site lower maintenance is to allow the intended plants to grow densely so they crowd out the weeds – something the client didn't want.

On top of that, on this full-sun site, the kind of native plants available like poor soils – because the competition is thinner and their growth stays firm. Native, sun-loving plants in rich soils sprawl and they flop. It's just a poor match of conditions and plants.

Sand and stones

I was working on a different new-build site at the start of the season. This one had no amended soil – just the kind of sandy, gravelly ground you find after construction.

My crew were wondering what on earth I was doing, planting into that stony, terrible soil. They thought nothing would grow there.

About half the planting was sun-loving grasses: little bluestem and prairie dropseed. These plants do fine in poor conditions, with growth that's firm, not floppy.

Then, for flowers, depending on the exact location within the site, I added yarrow – a plant that loves disturbed conditions – asters, coreopsis, and liatris. These are all plants that can handle full sun and dry conditions, with low soil nitrogen.

I visited the site again the other day, 11 weeks after it was planted. The grasses were three times the size they were on planting day and the little bluestem had started to flower, the yarrow was in bloom, as was the liatris.

It's still the first season, so there was still some open ground, but the site was working.

This was the type of planting the client with the rich soil wanted – and here it was a good fit for the conditions. And it was relatively simple for my client to stay on top of the weeds because there wasn't the rich soil for them to feed on.

Getting it going

This site wouldn't have worked if my client hadn't helped it establish. Plants in pots are a very different beast to plants that arrive by seed. It's quite unnatural to put a plant with lots of foliage in dry, hot, sunny ground and expect it to survive. The roots don't have access to enough water to support the plant.

But my client had followed my instructions, deeply watering the site using a temporary irrigation set-up every couple of days in the drought of the early summer. The heath asters were about to bloom.

Simon Payn owns Grounded, which designs, installs and cares for ecological landscapes in Haliburton County. Visit groundedgardens.ca.



By Simon Payn

This was the type of planting the client with the rich soil wanted. Here the plants were a good fit for the conditions.

It should feel like the Highlands.

Grounded designs and installs ecological landscapes for Haliburton County properties – and cares for them over time.

At some point, the wrong landscape stops working. If that's where you are, visit groundedgardens.ca.

grounded
GARDENING FOR LIFE



Grinding through the forest

More than 600 athletes pulled on their running shoes over the weekend (Sept 12-13) for the 33rd annual Haliburton Forest Trail Race. Participants from far and wide navigated the rugged beauty of the forest in a variety of course lengths, including the event's signature Haliburton Forest 100 Miler.

Top: Participants line up to get their race kits ahead of their 10 a.m. start time. Middle: An athlete is all smiles as he competes on Saturday. Bottom: People were in good spirits at the start line. *Photos by Adam Frisk.*

CENTURY 21

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Hevesi** &
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Ashley McKeigue*
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Kirsten Rae*
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Darlene Reil*
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Highlander events



Honouring our vets

White crosses were placed on veterans' gravesites by Legion, Ladies Auxiliary, Haliburton Lions Club members and students from Hal High's independent studies class to mark Veterans Decoration Day on Sept. 14. The crosses were placed on graves located in Evergreen and St. Anthony cemeteries in Haliburton where they will remain until Sept. 19.

Above: Legion president Mike Waller and chaplain Garry Swagerman stand at attention during the singing of the national anthem. Top right: Linda Heeps speaks during the annual Veterans Decoration Day at St. Anthony cemetery. Middle right: Hal High student Holland Meyer places a cross on a gravesite. Bottom right: Colton Ansley places a cross next to a veteran's gravestone. *Photos by Adam Frisk*

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 911 • AFTER-HOURS MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY DIAL 1-866-856-3247 • WWW.MINDENHILLS.CA

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

- *As the Shoreline Disappears* by glass artist Brad Copping will be on display in the Agnes Jamieson Gallery until September 19.
- Curated by Carmel Brennan, *Letters to the Earth: Between Despair and Hope* features over 25 artists that invite communities to participate in an ongoing conversation about the environmental crisis. The exhibit will be on display at the Gallery from September 24 to November 28, 2026. The artist reception will take place on Saturday, September 26 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Join us on September 15 at 1:00 p.m. for Sylvia Best of the Kawartha Ancestral Research Association (KARA). Sylvia is the author of the six-book series *Robinson Roots: Footprints of the Past* and will be speaking about Irish immigrant history in Peterborough County. This event is presented by the Haliburton Highlands Genealogy Group. Admission is free and refreshments will be available.
- Join Andrea Coysh for a working demonstration of our barn loom on September 17 and 18 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. These demonstrations are part of the activities scheduled by Hike Haliburton.
- Culture Days is an annual cross-country festival that provides the opportunity for community groups and individuals to highlight local arts, culture, and heritage. Led by the Arts Council ~ Haliburton Highlands, Haliburton County has been designated a Provincial Hub for the Ontario Culture Days Festival! On Saturday, September 26, join us for a wide variety of activities from 10 am – 4 pm.
- The Minden Hills Museum and Heritage Village, and Nature's Place is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am - 4 pm for self-guided tours and exhibits until October 10! Stop by for Toddler Discovery Zone on Friday from 11 am – 12 pm and Hands-On Saturdays on Saturday from 11 am – 12 pm.

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763. All welcome. Admission is by donation.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

New place, new responsibility.

Your landlord must provide working smoke alarms outside all sleeping areas and on every storey. Your landlord must give you a copy of the alarm maintenance instructions.

Your job is to flag it if they are not working properly. Ready-to-send email messages are available on www.savedbythebeep.ca

VOTER INFORMATION CENTRE

Need to update your information on the Voters list? The Township of Minden Hills Election Team has extended office hours! Visit us at 7 Milne St. during the below times.

- Tuesdays from September 1 – October 20:
8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Admin building
- September 12, 19, and 26: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.,
Council Chambers

Please note that these extended hours are for election matters only.

WHEN IS AN ENTRANCE PERMIT REQUIRED?

If you alter an existing driveway, in any way, by paving it or widening it as an example, you must apply for an entrance permit. Visit our Roads and Sidewalks page on our website for more information.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

- September 24 – Regular Council Meeting
- October 8 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

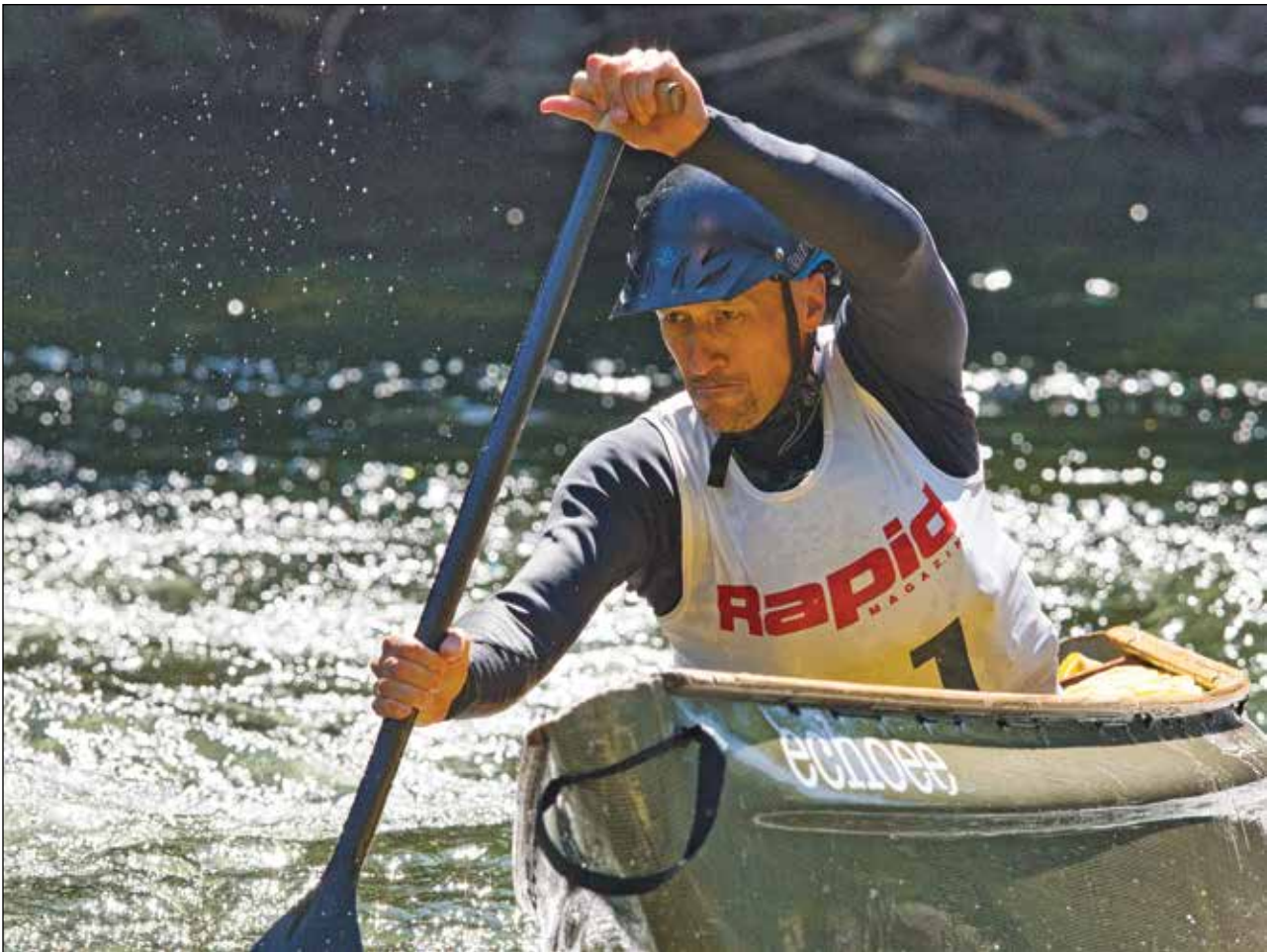


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Highlander events



It takes a lot of gull

The annual Gull River Open Canoe Whitewater Race took over the Minden Whitewater Preserve last weekend (Sept. 12-13) with athletes from all over Ontario competing on the river. Competitors raced under perfect weather conditions as spectators lined the riverbank to cheer on the competition.

Top: A competitor stays focused while navigating the course on the Gull River. Bottom left: A paddler lines up his path. Bottom right: A competitor stays focused while navigating the course on the Gull River. *Photos by Adam Frisk*

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Highlander community



Left: Carter McCord helps a young hockey player and his mom. Right: Lucas Lawson tests a helmet on a young player to see if it fits. *Photos submitted.*

Successful swap spawns winter edition

By Mike Baker

After spending two hours outfitting youth with hockey equipment at A.J. LaRue Arena in Haliburton Aug. 28, Manny Lawson said the most satisfying thing, aside from seeing the smiles on kids' faces, was being able to tell parents all items were free.

"Some of them couldn't believe it. They were saying, 'wait, I don't have to pay for any of this?'" Lawson said, noting some got quite emotional. "That makes all the work worthwhile and makes us want to do this

every year."

Now in its third year, the offering is meant to remove barriers for County kids wanting to play hockey. Lawson collected all types of equipment, including sticks, helmets, gloves, pads, shorts and skates, for youth aged three to 17. Sets were laid out on tables for people to choose from.

Lawson, her son Lucas and his friend, Carter McCord, were at the arena between 10 a.m. and noon, matching 35-40 kids with complimentary gear. Lawson said a few moms looking to lace up the skates for

the first time in years also took some items home.

While she didn't charge anyone a penny, Lawson did ask for donations to support area food banks, with all items dropped off in the donation bin at Haliburton Foodland over the weekend.

Since launching, Lawson said the equipment swap has supported around 165 youth.

With lots of sticks, pads and skates left over, Lawson is planning to run another event in January.

"Kids grow so quickly, and we'd love to continue helping families keep their children on the ice without the expense of constantly replacing equipment," Lawson said. "It is wonderful to see our community come together to make hockey more accessible to local families... if you have youth gear you would like to donate, please keep it and bring it to either the January swap, or next August."

To contact Lawson, email mannyfergie@hotmail.com.



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Highlander community



Lending HERS a helping hand

Last week, the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) Haliburton Highlands presented a donation to support the Peterborough Haliburton YWCA HERS (Haliburton Emergency Rural Safe Space) program. HERS currently provides two units in Haliburton County to support women experiencing violence or abuse. The first full CFUW chapter meeting of the year is Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. at Haliburton School of Art + Design. A short business meeting to elect the new executive will be followed by an interest club fair, where members can sign up for interest groups, ranging from cuisine groups, book clubs, hiking, sports, and more. The meeting is open to anyone interested. *(Lisa Gervais).*

Above: Left to right: Cindy Vasey, CFUW past president, Tina Thornton, HERS director of philanthropy, Akshana Katoch, fund development manager, and Jan Delville, CFUW liaison for HERS. *Submitted.*

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Tues. Sept 29th Lindsay Private Party
Sat. Oct. 3rd Sir Sam's Inn 8-10
Sun. Oct 4th Bancroft Brewery 1-4
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A positive start to the school year

Home Hardware stores in Haliburton and Minden have partnered with Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents, and the Minden Community Food Centre, to provide backpacks and school supplies to students and families throughout the Haliburton Highlands. The donations are part of an annual initiative that provided 1,200 backpacks to students via a group of 13 Home Hardware stores owned and operated by Dan and Emily Moulton. "We know many local families continue to face financial challenges, and the cost of preparing children for a new school year can add even more pressure," said dealer-owner, Dan Moulton. "We're proud to support families in the communities we serve and hope these backpacks and school supplies help give local students a positive start to the year." (Lisa Gervais)

Top: Haliburton store general manager, Erin Teel, right, with Amanda Wells and Tiffany Jones of Point in Time. Bottom: Melissa Ryan, Minden assistant store manager, team member, Charlene Fox, third from left, and Minden Community Food Centre manager Tracey Gilbert and board chair Jim Wilson. Submitted.



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County says take a hike

By Mike Baker

With the latest round of tariffs in the renewed Canada-U.S. trade war hitting people in their pockets, the County's tourism manager, Angelica Ingram, said this week's Hike Haliburton festival is a no-cost option for those looking to make memories on a budget.

Now in its 23rd year, the event runs Thursday-Sunday (Sept. 17-20) with 42 guided hikes and experiences. Hike Haliburton is Canada's largest multi-day hiking festival, Ingram noted.

"In these uncertain economic times, Hike Haliburton continues to offer visitors a free experience throughout the Highlands. Guests can enjoy a variety of experiences and outdoor adventure at no cost to them, which is why people return year over year," Ingram said.

Eric Casper, a longtime organizer, said the fall edition of the festival usually attracts around 500 participants – with about half coming from outside the County.

He noted many of the hikes still have spots available, with registration online at myhaliburtonhighlands.com/hike-haliburton.

One of Saturday's sessions will take people on a tour of the 'Geocaching Capital of Canada'. Michele Little is leading a 90-minute, roughly two-and-a-half-kilometre guided hike around Wilberforce, starting at the RC Legion Branch 624 on Burleigh Road at 4 p.m.

She'll be teaching the basics of navigating, with people able to utilize their smartphones to help locate hidden caches in spots around Dark Lake. Little, who has helped run tours since 2019, said it's a great hike for people of all ages.

"It will be a nice stroll along the water's edge. This will be a great time of conversation on what geocaching is all about," Little said, noting if you've seen the signs along Hwy. 118, 503 and 648 "and always wondered what 'geocaching' is, now is the time to find out."

On Sunday, Marci Mandel is leading a full group on her annual 'Crane Lake Cleanse'. Starting at the Devil's Lake Trailhead at QEII Wildlands Provincial Park, Mandel said she'll teach sound bathing and forest bathing techniques to help people feel more at one with nature.

"I love leading it because I love seeing people relax and connect in a deep and caring way," Mandel said.

Also on Sunday, from 10:30-11:45 a.m., Dominion Hotel owners Shawn and Elli Chamberlin will take people on a stroll along the Riverwalk for their 'Steps and Stories, Downtown Minden' hike.

Running a little over an hour, Chamberlin said he'll be chatting about the weather, water levels, local history and more.

"This walk will put a smile on your face and fresh dew on your shoes... we love meeting new people and sharing stories about our town with them. And it feels so good to get out for a nice morning walk," Chamberlin said, noting there are spots still available.



Marci Mandel is leading a meditative hike around Crane Lake on Sunday (Sept. 20) as Hike Haliburton returns for its 23rd year. *Submitted.*

Popular offerings

After scooping a prestigious Festivals and Events Ontario (FEO) 'impact award' last year for expanded Indigenous-based programming, led by Jared Big Canoe, Casper confirmed the Coldwater Ojibwe artist, entrepreneur and healer will be back again this week.

On Friday, Big Canoe is hosting a campfire at Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve where he will share Indigenous stories, song, drumming and demonstrations. On Saturday, he and Cameron Ferguson, Haliburton Forest's operations manager, will host a medicine walk on the Chessel's Pond Trail to discover sacred medicines and how they're used for healing.

"We're very excited to have Jared Big Canoe returning. The Indigenous experiences have been extremely well-received by participants," Casper said.

There are two new experiences at Sir Sam's, including a 'Haliburton Highlands: Photography Hike' on Thursday, led by Dave Bishop. There's also a fresh offering giving people the chance to explore the Twin Lake Ski Trails. Led by Joleen Thomas, the 'Ski Fit' hike runs Friday 10 a.m. to noon, giving people an opportunity to do some early scouting ahead of the 2026-27 ski season.

Casper noted the Minden Hills Cultural Centre has also expanded its programming for the festival, with Robert Wong running an artifact showcase featuring items from Minden's past on Thursday from 1-3 p.m. and Andrea Coysh hosting live weaving demonstrations Thursday and Friday from 10 a.m. to noon.

With fall and winter editions, Casper said Hike Haliburton has become more than a weekend festival.

"Over the past two decades, the Hike Haliburton brand has helped establish the Highlands as one of Ontario's premier hiking destinations," he said. "It continues to introduce people to places they often return to throughout the year, supporting local businesses, accommodations, restaurants and outdoor recreation providers."



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Mondays: Office closed, bridge from 1-4 p.m.
Tuesdays: Office open 9 a.m. to noon. Bar 5-9 p.m. Games and cards night starting at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome. Darts league 7 p.m. start.
Wednesdays: Office and clubroom closed, bid euchre 1-4 p.m.
Thursdays: Office open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Bar closed. General meeting third Thursday of the month, March to December; ladies auxiliary meeting last Thursday of the month, February to November.
Fridays: Meat draw, five draws, five prize each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets are \$2 per draw; fun darts at 4:30 p.m. onwards; 50/50 draw at 5 p.m., tickets are \$1 and available in the clubroom.
Saturdays: Open only for special events. Clubroom hours: Monday closed; Tuesday 5-9 p.m.; Wednesday closed; Thursday 3-6 p.m., Friday 3-7 p.m., Saturday/Sunday closed.

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Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
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Branch 624 Wilberforce

Monday: open 7 to 10 p.m. Darts Sept. 21 and 28 at 7 p.m.; Mexican train dominos at 7 p.m.; Sept. 28 painting class at 10 a.m.
Tuesday: closed, special events only. Exercise club Sept. 22 and 29 at 1 p.m.
Wednesday: open 2 to 10 p.m. Darts Sept. 23 and 30 at 2 p.m.; Ladies auxiliary quick supper from 5 to 6:30 p.m., open crib at 6:30 p.m.
Thursday: open 2 to 10 p.m. Horseshoes Sept. 17 and 24 at 7 p.m.; HHHS social recreation Sept. 10 and 24 at 10 a.m.; Painting class with Luann Sept. 17.
Friday: open 2 to 11 p.m. Wings and jam session Sept. 25 from 5 to 8 p.m.; Fish and chips Sept. 18; Seniors lunch Sept. 25 from noon to 1 p.m.
Saturday: open 2 to 9 p.m. Meat draw Sept. 19 and 26 at 3 p.m.; Sept. 19 Sock Hop 8 at noon, prizes for best costume. Hot dogs available.
Sunday: closed, special events only. Vets dinner Sept. 20 at 6 p.m.

Branch 566 Cardiff

Bar Hours: **Sunday and Monday** 3 to 6 p.m. and **Thursday** 3 to 9 p.m.
First **Sunday** of each month from 9 to 11 a.m.: Breakfast
Second **Sunday** of each month starting at 12:30 p.m.: Euchre
Every **Tuesday** from 7:00 to 9 p.m.: Euchre
Every **Thursday** from 7 to 9 p.m.: Shuffleboard
One **Saturday** of each month: Music and Jam Session from 1 to 4 p.m. Notice of date will be posted on Cardiff Facebook

EVENTS

Sept. 17 - 18 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. If you have extra apples on your property this fall, consider donating them to SIRCH. They make apple sauce and desserts for local families. Drop off at 49 Maple Ave. in Haliburton.

Sept. 17, 5-7 p.m. The YWCA Peterborough Haliburton is hosting its annual Take Back the Night event at Canadian Tire Minden. There will be banner-making from 5-5:15 p.m., speakers from 5:15-5:30 p.m. and then setting off down the Riverwalk trail at 5:30 p.m. Free refreshments.

Sept. 17-20, all day. The 71st annual Corduroy Enduro returns to Gooderham, with action running all weekend. This year's course features extreme sections, river crossings, MX tests, and an ISDE-style bike impound. www.corduroyenduro.ca.

Sept. 18-Oct. 4 Ontario Culture Days (onculturedays.ca) is a province-wide celebration of arts and culture that invites the public to get hands-on and behind-the-scenes to explore hundreds of free cultural experiences this fall. There will be celebrations at the Haliburton farmers market Sept. 22 and Minden's Sept. 26. View the full calendar of Haliburton events at onculturedays.ca.

Sept. 19, 9 a.m. to noon. The Kinmount and District Health Services Foundation is hosting its 28th annual Journey for Health fundraiser at Austin Sawmill Heritage Park. Pancake breakfast, meet local firefighters, browse a Friends of the Kinmount Library used book sale, and more. Funds support operations at the Kinmount health centre.

Sept. 19, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Colourfest at Head Lake Park. There will be buskers, inflatable games, a scavenger hunt, scarecrow building contest, facepainting and the traditional pumpkin rolling contest. Hosted by Township of Dysart et al.

Sept. 19, 7 p.m. Bingo fundraiser at Lloyd Watson Community Centre in Wilberforce. There will be a \$500 jackpot with other cash prizes. Presented by the Wilberforce Agricultural Fair, with proceeds supporting its youth ambassador program.

Sept. 20, 9 a.m. Sir Sam's is hosting a watch party for the installation of the upright lift towers - on the chalet deck beginning at 9 a.m. Viewing capacity and parking are limited, but reservations not required. Hiking trails will be closed Sunday morning for safety reasons, as no one will be permitted on the ski hill grounds during the helicopter installation.

Sept. 24, 1-3 p.m. Minden Hills Cultural Centre is hosting a documentary screening of Birth of a Family (2017), which tells the story of four Indigenous siblings, adopted as infants into separate families across North America, meeting for the first time. Free admission. A second screening runs 5-7 p.m.

Sept. 26, all day. Watercross racing at Pinestone Resort. Come out to see some rip-roaring fun on the water from the pond-side patio. Free admission for spectators. Also running Sept. 27.

Sept. 26, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fall Colours Fly-In at Stanhope Municipal Airport. The event will feature classic car and unique aircraft displays, food trucks, a barbecue, live music, artists and artisans, facepainting, an aviation author and more. Admission is free, with helicopter and airplane rides available for a fee. Overnight on-site camping is available for Sept. 25 by registration. Rain date is Sept. 27.



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Empty Bowls serving lunch and dinner

By Adam Frisk
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Haliburton's Empty Bowls fundraiser is adding a lunch seating this year as food insecurity continues to rise in the County.

Food bank usage is up 27 per cent and food costs continue to rise. That prompted organizers to change up the format this year to accommodate more people.

The event returns to the Haliburton Legion on Sept. 19. Organizers are offering lunch at 1 p.m. and dinner at 5 p.m.

Event organizer Louise Ewing said the change comes down to practical kitchen limits. Last year's dinner put pressure on volunteers working behind the scenes.

"It was just really hard to keep the soup flowing, getting it heated up to temperature, and getting enough spoons washed for the next seating," Ewing said. "So, we're trying the lunch and the dinner this year to see how that goes."

About 50 volunteers will be on hand throughout the day, serving 60 gallons of soup donated by 13 local restaurants. SIRCH Community Services and the 4Cs Food Bank are supplying 500 rolls to go with the meal.

The pottery remains the event's main draw. Attendees pick out a handcrafted ceramic bowl to eat from, then take it home as a physical reminder of food insecurity in the community.

Potter Michelle Anton spearheaded the effort again this year, co-ordinating with 10

local potters who crafted 360 pieces during the spring and summer. That exceeded their original target of 300, thanks in part to donated clay that helped offset material costs for the artists.

"When you walk into the Schofield room where they set up all the bowls, it's impressive," Ewing said. "They're all completely unique."

Money raised is divided equally between SIRCH's frozen meal program and the 4Cs Food Bank. Last year's turnout generated roughly \$7,000, sending \$3,500 to each organization.

As summer seasonal residents head back home after Labour Day and sales at the Lily Ann Thrift Store begin to dip, the timing of the fundraiser comes at an important time for the 4Cs. The store is a key source of revenue for buying food, even as grocery prices and client visits continue to climb.

Organizers also have a plan for any soup left over from dinner. It will be portioned into containers, frozen, and distributed directly to food bank clients.

There will also be a silent auction featuring brand-new items donated by residents through the SIRCH Thrift Warehouse and Lily Ann Thrift Store, including electronics, small kitchen appliances, and charcuterie boards.

Tickets are \$40 in person or \$42 through the Haliburton Legion website. Direct cash or e-transfer donations can also be made to SIRCH or the 4Cs Food Bank.



Volunteer Michelle Anton pictured at the 2024 Empty Bowls fundraiser. *File.*

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Cardiff Community Centre at 2747 Monck Road, Cardiff

02

Minden Hills

Saturday, Sept. 19, 9:30 AM to 12 noon (doors at 9 AM)
Minden Community Centre, 55 Parkside Street, Minden

03

Dysart et al

Saturday, Oct. 3, 9:30 AM to 12 noon (doors at 9 AM)
Haliburton Legion, 719 Mountain Street, Haliburton

04

Algonquin Highlands

Saturday, Oct. 17, 9:30 AM to 12 noon (doors at 9 AM)
Stanhope Firefighters' Hall, 1095 North Shore Road, Stanhope

05

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Healthy Democracy Project**

A project of the Haliburton County Community Cooperative, supported by the Telling Our Stories Speaker Series, HCDC and Canoe FM. ACMs in partnership with the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, and media sponsors: Canoe FM, Haliburton Echo, The Highlander, Minden Times, and Moose FM.

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HELP WANTED



The Corporation of the County of Haliburton Requires

IT Operations Manager

The successful applicant will possess post-secondary education in IT or a related discipline and five (5) years of progressive experience in IT operations, including experience supporting both user-facing services and back-end systems or infrastructure including service desk requests. Experience in a municipal or public-sector environment is considered an asset.

Business Analyst

The successful application will possess post-secondary education in Business Administration, Public Administration, Information Systems, Accounting, or a related field plus five years of related experience. For complete responsibilities and requirements please see the attached job description. The hourly wage rate for this CUPE unionized position is \$45.00.

Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for a detailed job postings and job descriptions. Please forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than **September 20, 2026**.

We thank all who apply for this position; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

The County of Haliburton is an equal opportunity employer. Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details.

In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

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Highlander classifieds

SERVICES

HANDYMAN – Carpentry, General Repairs. Call or Text Doug at 416-889-8534

NEED A HANDYMAN? Professional chainsaw operator, JUNK-EEZ, building demolition & brush clearing, removal of dangerous tree’s. Pick Up Steel for free, local only. Call Ray at 705-306-4986 or 705-306-5202

HIGHLAND GREENERIES - We take care of your gardens so you can enjoy them. Garden Services: Garden Cleanups (Spring & Fall), Mulching, Weeding & Edging, Pruning & Seasonal Cutbacks, Ongoing Garden Maintenance. Also Offering: Spring/Fall Yard Cleanups, Leaf Removal & Raking. Proudly serving the Haliburton Highlands and surrounding areas. Highlandgreeneries@hotmail.com 705-455-2813 / 705-455-2156

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Cottage, Maintenance, general repairs, staining, painting, roofing & carpentry. Call Mike at 705-457-6365

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FOR SALE – Ontario Garlic & Scapes, Garlic & Scape Powders, Garlic Sauces, Spreads, Jams, Jellies, Pickles, SEED GARLIC. 1434 Kashagawigamog Lake Road, 2.2 km from County Road 21, Minden 705-286-1617

FOR SALE – GUILFORD FIREWOOD – Nicely cut and split, ready to burn. \$140. per face cord – pick up. Delivery available, call 705-754-3034

FOR SALE

FOR SALE - Haliburton Micromeadows Native Plant Nursery - Open Fri-Mon, 10am-4pm at 1274 Lochlin Rd., Minden (located on private property). We carry a wide variety of native Ontario perennials, grasses, small trees and shrubs for gardens and habitat projects. Visit haliburtonmicromeadows.ca or follow us on Facebook @haliburtonmicromeadows

FOR SALE - Cubcadet Rototiller Model #215-440-100. Excellent condition, mechanically sound, \$500.00. Please call 705-457-5465

FOR RENT

FOR RENT – Granite Cove Condo, located at 1 Park Street, Haliburton, with breathtaking view of Head Lake. 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, partially furnished, all appliances, underground parking and storage unit. Please call Dan at 905-853-8253

FOR RENT - 1 Bedroom Apt in Haliburton. All inclusive, plenty of parking. Pictures available upon request. Available Oct or Nov, \$1,900. per month. Call 705-457-0861

FOR RENT

FOR RENT – Warehouse / Storage Space, located at 81 Mallard Road, Unit B, Main floor warehouse available for rent starting July 1st. Equipped with 2 Washrooms, Large main floor space, overhead mezzanine storage and commercial delivery garage door. This space was once set up as a commercial cooking space and a storage facility, but could easily be converted to: a Paint-shop, storage or office space. Call 705-457-2375 with enquiries.

HELP WANTED

REPUTABLE BUILDING CONTRACTOR looking for a person with Carpentry Experience. Must have valid driver’s license. Please call 705-754-4603.

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED- Mark’s Restaurant is hiring a part time server, must be 18 years of age or older, able to work evenings. 705-286-1818 and ask for Wilson or email marksrestaurant@icloud.com

WANTED

J & D TOWING & SERVICE STATION - will pay top dollar for scrap cars. We also provide towing services as well as flat bed. Call Jim 705-447-2113

WANTED – Scrap metal, fridges, stoves, any metal. We will pick up. Please call 519-820-5701 this is a Gooderham phone number.

WORK WANTED

HALIBURTON MAN looking for work, Mason by trade, but familiar with all aspects of construction, reno’s demo, bush work, etc. Also, Chimney or Fireplace repair, brick, block, stone, concrete & tile. Call Shannon at 306-317-7073

NOTICE

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS - Sundays - 10:30 am at St. Anthony’s, 27 Victoria Street Haliburton. Thinking about alcohol. Thinking about stopping. We’ve been there. We can help!

AL ANON- WE CARE, Meetings: Thursdays 7 p.m., St. Anthony’s 27 Victoria Street, Haliburton, and Mondays 7 p.m. at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle, Rear Entrance, Minden. All are welcome.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

It took 95 years to look this good!



Friends are Invited to Celebrate the Legend
Patricia (Pat) Bradburn
on
Sunday, October 4th, 2026
1:00 PM until 4:00 PM (Remarks at 2:30 PM)
at
The Dominion Hotel Pub
113 Main Street, Minden ON K0M 2K0



The Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) currently has an exciting opportunity for an energetic and experienced individual to join the team!

DIRECTOR, FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
COMPENSATION: \$60.44/hr - \$75.56/hr
(Full-time Permanent)

The Director, Facilities Management is responsible for providing strategic and operational oversight for all aspects of the facility’s physical buildings and grounds. In addition, this position provides leadership and mentorship to the Manager, Environmental Services and Facility Operations, ensuring effective and efficient operation of all aspects of the department including general maintenance, security, housekeeping and laundry. In addition, the Director, Facilities Management is responsible for the planning, organizing and implementation of all projects pertaining to the physical buildings and/or their operations, and the grounds.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- A graduate of a recognized educational institution with certificate of qualification in Architecture, Electrical/Mechanical Engineering, Stationary Engineering, Structural Engineering, or equivalent building related field.
- Possess a minimum of five (5) years progressive management experience in Engineering/Facility Services, preferably in a hospital and/or long-term care environment, and demonstrating extensive knowledge of systems such as HVAC, plumbing, electrical, mechanical and code compliance.
- Exceptional Project Management skills required.
- Excellent written, verbal and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to prioritize and adapt to unpredictable and changing situations.
- Ability to work independently without supervision, in addition to effectively leading a team.

If you are interested in joining the HHHS team for the above position, please submit your resume in confidence to:

Human Resources
Haliburton Highlands Health Services
Box 115, Haliburton, Ontario, K0M 1S0
hr@hhhs.ca | Fax: 705-457-4609 | www.hhhs.ca

HHHS uses AI-enabled tools to sort applications based on job-related criteria. Haliburton Highlands Health Services thanks all applicants, however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted. If you are contacted by HHHS regarding a job opportunity or testing, please advise if you require accommodation. Information received relating to accommodation needs of applicants will be addressed confidentially.

Highlander classifieds

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LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

A	R	E	T	L	T	E	T	H	S	S	N	R	
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THIS WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

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2	7	5	4	8	1	9	3	6					

IN MEMORIUM



In Loving Memory

In loving memory of Donna Sisson
who passed away
September 18, 2025

She is greatly missed
by everyone who knew her

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A
Celebration of Life



BARB BARKER
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CURTIS BARKER
1989 - 2026

Come share memories, stories, laughter and love as
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SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 19TH, 2026
1:00-5:00PM

At 3:00pm, we will share favourite memories of Barb
and Curtis.

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OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of
Christina "Chris" Kranyak



Passed away unexpectedly at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre on Wednesday, May 20, 2026.

Loving wife of Mike, dear sister to Marie Lennard, Cindy Edelkoort, Joyce Johnson and sister-in-law to Nancy, Carolyn and Rick. Fondly remembered by many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Chris and Mike moved to Minden over 5 years ago and Chris was actively involved with the Minden Health Care Auxiliary, Minden Curling Club, Senior Shuffleboard and enjoyed her time working at the Dominion Hotel.

A Memorial Gathering to Celebrate of Chris's Life will be held at the Dominion Hotel in the "Boat House", 113 Bobcaygeon Rd., Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0 on Saturday, September 26, 2026 from 2:00 pm until 4:00 pm.

Memorial Donations to the Minden Health Care Auxiliary would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

In Loving Memory of
Barb Schellenberg (Nee Willis)



Passed away peacefully on August 31, 2026 after a brief illness at St. Clare's Mercy Hospital in St. John's, Newfoundland, surrounded by her loving daughter Sara and her dear friend Theresa.

Barb was predeceased by her beloved husband, Dave; her parents, Alma and Les Willis; her in-laws, Joyce and Earl Schellenberg; and other cherished family members.

She is survived by her daughter, Sara, her brothers Bill (Amy), Jim (Terry) and her sister Donna (Dave). She is also survived by many nieces, nephews, in-laws, her large circle of close friends, and her fur baby, Maggie, all of whom she loved dearly.

Barb was born May 14, 1949 in Lindsay, Ontario. She met the love of her life, Dave, in Mississauga and they later moved to Haliburton, Dave's hometown, where they built their home and family.

Barb built a successful career in banking while navigating serious heart issues from a very young age. Many years later, she and Dave reconnected with an old friend from Newfoundland, which led to their purchase of a cottage in Boswarlos, Newfoundland. They spent every summer enjoying their beautiful surroundings and the company of their many close friends.

Barb was a very kind and generous soul who lived life to the fullest right to the end. She was up for a game of cards or bingo, whether it be at the bingo hall, on TV or the radio any time, day or night. We are all truly blessed to have been part of Barb's life.

The family would like to thank all the healthcare professionals involved in Barb's care. Special thanks to those who treated Barb in her final days starting at Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital in Stephenville, Western Memorial in Corner Brook and St. Clare's Mercy Hospital in St. John's. There are truly angels among us.

A celebration of Barb's life will be held at the Haliburton Fish Hatchery, 6712 Gelert Road, on Saturday, September 26th from 1:00pm-4:00pm.

Highlander puzzles

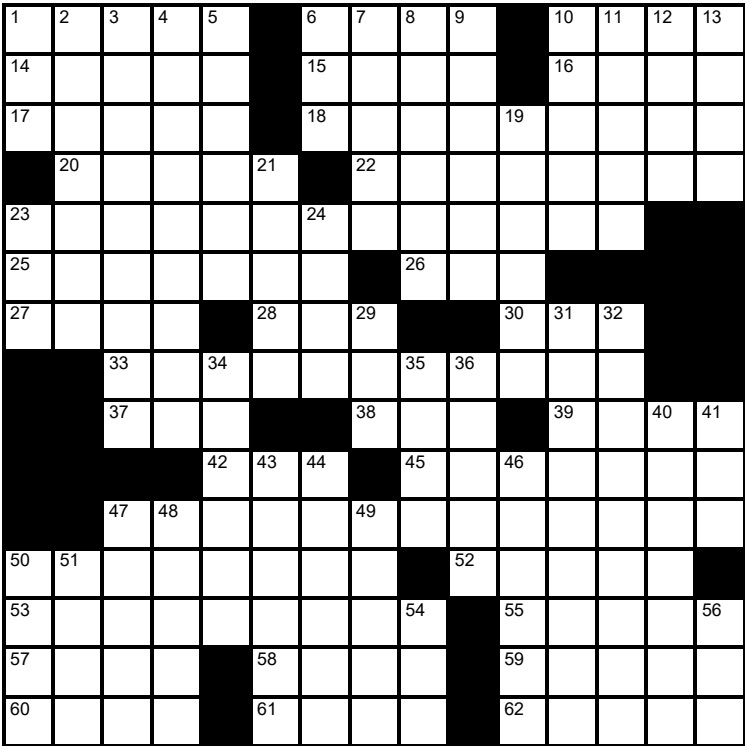
The Very Hungry Crossword Constructor

by Barbara Olson
© ClassiCanadian Crosswords

- Across**
- 1 He parted the Red Sea
 - 6 Danish boot brand
 - 10 Red ink, in accounting
 - 14 Deep-six
 - 15 Broker's advice in a bear market
 - 16 High IBU beers
 - 17 Hadj destination
 - 18 Bombed
 - 20 Face-to-face exams
 - 22 Gave a modest response to, as a joke
 - 23 Blab
 - 25 "Cautionary Tales for Children" author Belloc
 - 26 Nine-digit ID in the U.S.
 - 27 Icy Hot rival
 - 28 The pride of Parry Sound
 - 30 Prefix meaning "vision"
 - 33 Snaps
 - 37 Sea eagle
 - 38 "___ the Dog" (De Niro film)
 - 39 "Auntie" in a play
 - 42 One after Y2K, to Caesar
 - 45 Sana natives
 - 47 Think
 - 50 Stand for David
 - 52 Calorie-rich cake
 - 53 Kaput
 - 55 Realm in "The Lord of the Rings"
 - 57 "But ___ fire to the rain" (Adele lyric)
 - 58 Eyeshadow targets
 - 59 "___ Written in a Country Churchyard" (Chesterton poem)
 - 60 Ancient harp
 - 61 Common comfort food
 - 62 Gathered for another conference

- Down**
- 1 "Lou Grant" production co.
 - 2 Dessert with a cookie crust
 - 3 Blasphemous behaviour
 - 4 Subway stairs alternative

- 5 "Would you like me to?"
- 6 New Canadian's subj.
- 7 ___ to be (die)
- 8 Hikes up
- 9 8-track tunes, maybe
- 10 Sheets and shams, etc.
- 11 "Here's what I think" articles
- 12 It's a long story
- 13 Mid-ranking RCMP
- 19 12-step program for families
- 21 Houston ball club, informally
- 23 Finger-to-lips sound
- 24 Parsley, sage, rosemary or thyme
- 29 Like steak tartare
- 31 Brief appearance by Hitchcock
- 32 Protest song on Pink Floyd's "The Dark Side of the Moon"
- 34 Trap in netting
- 35 Thumbs-downs
- 36 Writer's rep
- 40 Car buyer's fuel concern
- 41 Language suffix, often
- 43 Road trip stopover spots
- 44 Shortly
- 46 One docking a vessel
- 47 Milk dispenser?
- 48 Seven, in Sicily
- 49 Slip away from
- 50 Hockey's Esposito
- 51 Rating for many Monday crosswords
- 54 Sydney's state: Abbr.
- 56 Big Apple daily: Abbr.



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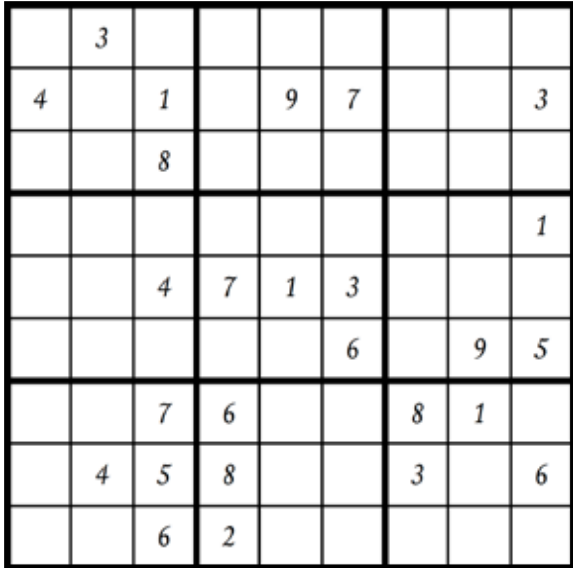
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613-332-0577

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