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The Highlander

Thursday **November 26 2026** | Issue 767

INSIDE: RED HAWK GIRLS BASKETBALL SCORES AT COSSA PAGE 20 **FREE**



New sheriff in town

Dysart et al mayor, Greg Bishop, was acclaimed as warden of Haliburton County Nov. 24. See the story on page 3. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

County tourism ready for El Nino winter

By Adam Frisk
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Faced with long-range forecasts suggesting a strong El Nino winter with mild temperatures and mid-season thaws, tourism officials and outdoor operators in Haliburton County said they are prepared for the winter season no matter what kind of weather Mother Nature throws at them.

Between snowmaking machines, indoor events, and steady bookings from out-of-towners, major operators said they are better prepared for a warm stretch than they were a few years ago.

Speaking to *The Highlander* on Nov. 16, County tourism manager Angelica Ingram said major winter operators, including Sir Sam's Ski/Ride, have not voiced concern over early weather predictions.

"To be completely truthful, [I haven't heard anxiety] yet," Ingram said. "I think the good thing for some of our major tourism winter operators is they are getting more adept at preparing for milder winters."

Over at Winterdance Dogsled Tours, co-owner Tanya McCready-DeBruin is entering her 28th winter in the Highlands. After back-to-back short seasons, she and partner, Hank DeBruin, decided they needed a way to protect some of their trails when natural snow just wasn't in the forecast.

"With two years back-to-back we can't take a chance on Mother Nature anymore," McCready-DeBruin said.

Continued **'Plans'** on page 2



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There's plenty of adventure with Winterdance Dogsled Tours as seen in this image depicting a half-day tour in Haliburton. *Winterdance Dogsled Tours (Courtesy Darren Lum Photography)*

Plans for uncooperative weather

Continued from page 1

"That's when I made the decision to invest in snow-making equipment so we could help buffer those years that you wish winter was a little bit stronger."

So, they purchased a commercial snowmaking machine two years ago. It happened to be delivered on the exact same day as a new unit for Sir Sam's.

McCready-DeBruin explained that they use on-property water sources and skid steers to build a dense base across about four to five kilometres of core trails. These trails tend to hold up better during brief warmups than natural powder. But there's some science involved in the process. Making snow requires a specific combination of below-zero temperatures and low humidity

"It's a combination of temperature, but also moisture in the air," she said. "The higher the humidity, the colder the temperature needs to be. If you have a drier night, then you don't need as cold a temperature."

McCready-DeBruin said Winterdance's advance bookings are ahead of last year, with many overseas travellers who book without paying too close attention to North American forecasts.

Ingram also noted similar international demand for bed and breakfasts and Fort Treehouse Co., with guests coming in from the UK, Germany, and the Netherlands.

The manager of tourism said that people in the Greater Toronto Area often hesitate to book winter trips when Toronto lacks snow. Some are waiting until one or two months before booking travel due to economic uncertainty.

"If Toronto doesn't have snow or other parts of Ontario... people aren't in the winter mindset, and then they don't book, even if we have a lot of snow," Ingram said. "So it's about getting that messaging out that winter's always here."

If the weather isn't co-operating, there's still plenty of things to do in the Highlands. Ingram said the County has been planning the 2027 February Folk Fest since the summer to establish the live music event as an annual fixture. The County has also been plugging year-round attractions like Abbey Gardens, Haliburton Forest's wolf centre, museums, and wellness spas as affordable weekend getaways.

But for McCready-DeBruin, the bigger business hurdle so far this season hasn't been the weather outlook; it's been a lack of group accommodations. She said Winterdance was forced to decline two corporate groups of 30 to 40 people recently because there's not a single property in the County that could provide enough single-occupancy rooms.

"I don't know about El Nino," McCready said, echoing a remark from her partner. "But losing two corporate groups because we can't find a place to put them? That kind of sucked this winter."

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Bishop acclaimed as County warden

By Lisa Gervais



Dysart et al mayor, Greg Bishop, was acclaimed as the County warden Nov. 24. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

The role of warden of Haliburton County has come full circle –152 years later.

CAO Gary Dyke noted on Tuesday (Nov. 24) that the first warden selected in 1874 was land surveyor, Alexander Niven. Land surveyor, and Dysart et al mayor, Greg Bishop, was acclaimed to the Highlands' top political position this past week.

The ceremony took place in the former land registry office in Minden, which is now a County-owned building.

Dyke said nominations opened Nov. 3 and closed Nov. 19 with Bishop being the sole applicant. A motion to make him warden was moved by Minden Hills mayor Tammy McKelvey and seconded by Dysart et al deputy mayor Walt McKechnie.

With former warden Dave Burton attending the meeting virtually, the job of passing on the warden's robe and chain fell to Algonquin Highlands mayor Liz Danielsen.

Bishop said he was passionate, not just about Dysart et al, but the County. He spoke of how he played with the Minden Monarchs hockey team before going to university.

"As a surveyor, of course, I know every single inch of this County." He added there probably isn't a lake or river that he hasn't been on.

"In all reaches, from one end to the other, I'm certainly proud to represent the County and, of course, Dysart … because I think we've got lots of work to do ahead here with the amalgamation conversation and those types of things, and I'm a true believer that we can collaborate and work together and do the best for our own municipalities and the County as well."

He thanked the past members of County council (former Minden Hills mayor Bob Carter and deputy mayor Lisa Schell, the late former Dysart et al mayor Murray Fearrey, former Highlands East deputy mayor Cec Ryall and former Algonquin Highlands deputy mayor Jennifer Dailloux). He also thanked Burton for his work as warden the past year, as well as Danielsen and McKechnie. The three are the only returning councillors out of eight.

"Hopefully, we'll have great new ideas but also be pulled and reamed back in by a few of the ones that have been around for awhile, as we move forward," Bishop said.

The rest of council, including Algonquin Highlands deputy mayor, Don Embree, Highlands East deputy mayor Angela Lewis, and Minden Hills deputy mayor, Ivan Ingram, was sworn in.

Meanwhile, council got back to business Wednesday (Nov. 25) with their first regular council meeting. We'll have more on that in next week's *Highlander.*

Lewis appointed deputy mayor of Highlands East

By Adam Frisk,
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

There's a new deputy mayor in town after Highlands East coun. Angela Lewis was appointed to the role on Tuesday (Nov. 24) during a regular meeting of council.

Council approved the appointment unanimously after Lewis ran unopposed for the position. Coun. Amy Toye nominated Lewis, while coun. Arlene Quinn seconded the motion.

Deputy clerk Katelyn Patterson explained that under municipal guidelines, nominations are called three times, and requires a mover and seconder. It's then decided by a majority show-of-hands vote.

After three calls, no other candidates were nominated. Lewis accepted the role and council voted to end the nomination process.

Lewis thanked her constituents for electing her to municipal office and thanked her fellow council members for their support.

"I just want to say thank you to my constituents for giving me a seat at the municipal table. I want to thank all council for giving me a seat at the County council. This is very humbling," Lewis said.

"There's lots of work to be done, and I look forward to working with all members of council at the County table."

The role of deputy mayor gives Lewis a seat on Haliburton County council, where she will represent Highlands East at the upper-tier table for the next four years.

Mayor Dave Burton, who attended the meeting remotely, congratulated Lewis on the appointment.

"I look forward to working with you at the County as well," he said.

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Highlander news





DYSART ET AL NEWS

Strong mayor powers

Chairing the first meeting of Dysart et al's new council Tuesday (Nov. 24), mayor Greg Bishop said he intends to maintain a collaborative approach to local governance this term, side-stepping some of the strong mayor powers issued by the Ontario government.

In May 2025, the province extended the powers to all single and lower-tier municipalities with councils containing six members or more. Dysart was one of 217 townships included.

The powers fall into three categories: legislative, which gives the power to veto bylaws or bring an issue to council for discussion without a seconder; budget powers and duties, so working with the treasurer and department heads on the annual budget before presenting to council; and administrative and political, which includes the power to appoint or remove a CAO, establish new committees, change organizational structure, and final authority over employment matters.

CAO Tamara Wilbee noted the legislative and budget powers cannot be delegated to staff or council, but that administrative and political could.

Bishop agreed to hand over authority to hire and fire the CAO and create and dissolve committees to council, while organizational structure of the municipality has been delegated to Wilbee.

He committed to working with staff and council collaboratively on all other issues, including the budget, just as previous mayor, Murray Fearrey, did.

"We're not making any changes at all with regard to the strong mayor powers. It will be status quo on that front," Bishop said. "The routine on budget is never going to change here. We're going to do it the exact same way they did it during the last council, and the council before that… where we all have input."

The first draft of the budget will be presented Dec. 11. Council will then have 30 days to make amendments, with any proposed changes to be discussed Jan. 8. After that, Bishop will have 10 days to veto any council amendment. Mayoral vetoes must be set out through an official mayoral decision and include reasons for the veto.

Within 15 days of the veto period ending, council may meet to attempt to override any mayoral vetoes, though votes require a two-thirds majority.

Once the process of amendments, vetoes and overrides is finished, the budget is deemed to have been adopted, with no final approval required.

New integrity commissioner

The township has appointed a new integrity commissioner, with John Mascarin of Toronto-based Aird and Berlis LLP to take on the role. He replaces the retired Tony Fleming.

Wilbee said Aird and Berlis serves as integrity commissioner for 80 public sector entites in Ontario. They also act as a municipal ombudsman and provide advice to municipal lobbyist registrars and auditors general.

Mascarin is a certified specialist in municipal law, local government and land use planning and development through the Law Society of Ontario. He will begin the role Jan. 1. Wilbee noted all four lower-tier townships in the County will be utilizing Mascarin this term.

The integrity commissioner is responsible for following up on complaints of a councillor's conduct, ensuring they follow procedures, rules and policies for ethical behaviour and that they aren't in a conflict of interest when discussing municipal matters.

Recount request denied

Council shot down a request from Ward 1 candidate, Rob McCaig, to authorize a recount of registered votes from the downtown district during October's municipal election.

McCaig lost out on the seat to coun. Deb Lambe by 33 votes. He submitted the request Oct. 26, shortly after election results were made public.

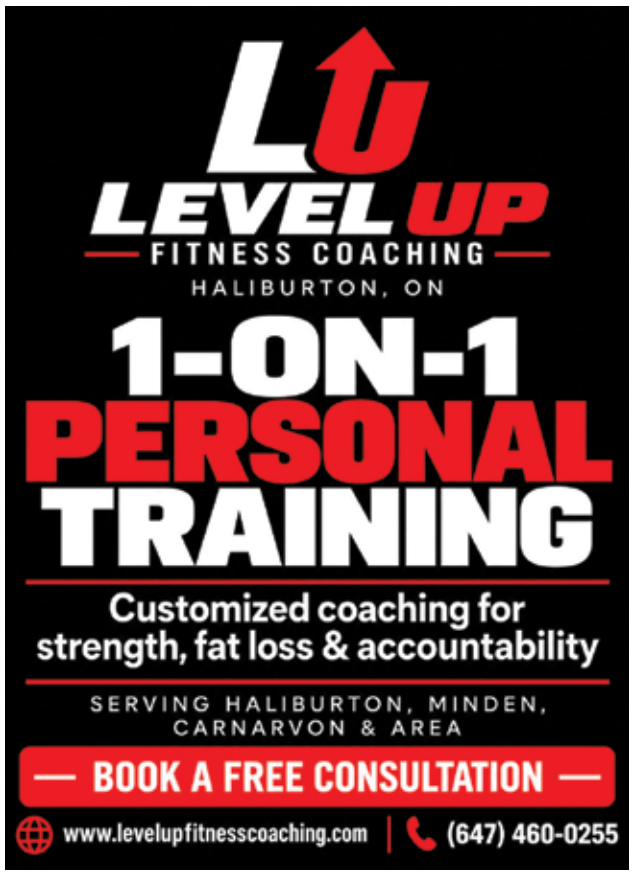
Wilbee said the main issue McCaig brought forward related to the voters list, which Elections Ontario handled and mailed out this term. Previously, it was handled by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation. McCaig contested some who were left off may not have voted, potentially impacting results, but Wilbee said that's not a factor council should consider.

"We've looked through everything we've done, and all the statistics and testing, and can't find any grounds or reason to believe there was an issue with the count," Wilbee said.

Council unanimously supported Wilbee's recommendation to deny the request, though the CAO noted McCaig has the option to take the issue to the Supreme Court.

"The court would have to find grounds for why the actual count wasn't proper, or that there were mistakes, or there are questions about the integrity of the vote," she said.

(Dysart et al briefs by Mike Baker)





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Country Bakery owner, Sue Buzza, with Robert Poole. The bakery is collecting donations for Poole. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

Fire takes treasured memories

By Lisa Gervais

It's been more than a week since fire claimed Robert Poole's home along Hwy. 118 in Algonquin Highlands, but the 81-year-old told *The Highlander* this week "I'll survive.

"Honest to God, I have no idea what happened," Poole said while seated at a table at Country Bakery in Carnarvon Nov. 23.

He said he woke up at 6 a.m. Nov. 16 and sat up in bed. His outside sensor light came on but did not switch off as it usually does. So, he got up and looked out the window.

"And smoke was pouring out from under the garage."

He ran out but had forgotten the shed door was locked, so raced back to the house to get the key. He opened the door and began grabbing fire extinguishers to try to knock the flames down. However, as the extinguishers ran out of powder, the flames returned.

In the meantime, a passerby on the highway pulled over and Poole told him to call 911.

Poole said he could only watch as the fire spread from the garage, to his car, and then the house; thinking "there's my life gone.

"I couldn't get in. I couldn't fight the heat." He added, but "I'm alive."

He lost one cat in the fire, while another is missing. He has a couple of live traps on the property in hopes the cat comes back. He had only recently gotten the female black feline and had not yet named but said it might be called "Lucky" after surviving a house fire and returning home.

Since the blaze, The Country Bakery has been collecting donations for Poole at the Carnarvon store and by email transfer.

Poole said he normally never accepts help. "If I can't do it myself, it isn't getting done." However, "honest to God, it's nice."

He said some relatives travelled from out of town to check on him and staff from the bakery have been helping him out.

"I've got a bit of money and I'll survive."

Since last Monday, he has found a furnished rental, which has made a world of difference. He was worried about where he was going to stay, and "the time when you have nothing until you get something."

That said, he also acknowledged, "you cannot replace the memories that you lose in that way …" including a framed photo of his late wife, Margaret, whom he cared for during an illness for 15 years. He also thanked two young women who worked at the bakery for stopping in the day of the fire and ensuring the property remained secure.

> *"You cannot replace the memories that you lose in that way …"*
>
> ***Robert Poole***

Algonquin Highlands fire chief Michael French said they got a call at 7:20 a.m. and his department, as well as the Dysart et al fire department, responded with seven trucks and 28 firefighters. "We didn't get all the trucks back into service until 4 p.m."

He said the cause of the fire is classified as undetermined as of Nov. 24, and "it appears to be a total loss fire." He could not estimate the cost of loss.

He said Poole did have working smoke alarms, as required by the Ontario Fire Code.

It was his department's third structure fire in 2026. They were also called to a shed fire in Dorset Nov. 21.

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Highlander news

Saving Christmas one dog at a time

By Mike Baker

It's already been another record-breaking year for Snowflake Meadows Dog Rescue, with owner, Kristyn Begbie, saying the Lochlin-based animal shelter is making one last push to raise the money needed to complete a new 10-dog kennel.

The facility is mostly complete, with $94,000 spent on design and construction. Begbie estimated she needs another $20,000 to finish the outdoor portion of the build, including runs and a roof so that dogs can't get out. HVAC work will also be complete, ensuring the shelter's four-legged friends stay warm during the cold-weather months and cool through the summer.

"It's a big deal for us to get this kennel done, because right now all of those dogs are at my house," Begbie said. "It's a quiet weekend, but I have 28 dogs in my house right now. Then we have another eight farm dogs, and others that like to spend most of their time outside."

Begbie said a 'magic moments' fundraiser held Nov. 14 raised around $1,000, while she's hoping new 2027 calendars, featuring some of the rescue's dogs, will be popular. Begbie said they arrived last week and are available for $40.

The shelter is also preparing for its annual online auction, which kicks off Nov. 30 on its social media channels. Featured items include a dog training package from Snoop Dawg K9 Training, a floating dock, and gift cards to local restaurants.

"The auction did really well last year, bringing in over $12,000. I'm hoping for the same again, which would be a huge weight off the shoulders. This is the final push to get this kennel fully funded," Begbie said.



Snowflake Meadows' Kristyn Begbie needs to raise $20,000 to finish a 10-dog kennel build on her Lochlin property. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

Things have been tight this year operationally, Begbie said, with the shelter taking in more than 200 dogs year-to-date. Her initial costs, for basic vetting, is approximately $1,400 per animal, but can often be more. She has one dog right now who requires leg surgery, estimated at $2,400.

After spending $104,000 on medical expenses through all of 2025, Begbie said she eclipsed that total sometime in October.

"Everything has gone up in price this year, whether it's food, medicine, or the materials we've needed for the kennel. We've been hit from all angles," Begbie said, noting the shelter doesn't have a regular source of income. "I rely on this community – I do fundraising through the year and we have a lot of donors that keep us going."

When adopting out, Begbie said she absorbs a lot of the cost, charging people $900 per pet. "We get complaints about our fees being so high, but we take a loss on every single one. It's not about the money for me, but we have to have enough to keep going."

Begbie said she'll be releasing her 2027 costs in December and is expecting high totals.

With Christmas right around the corner, Begbie warned families looking to bring a pet into their home to be ready for the responsibility.

"A lot of people don't understand just how big of a commitment it is. Dogs require love and attention. They need to be trained so they know what they can and can't do. Sadly, we see many instances where a family rushes into a decision, doesn't have the time or resources needed and gives up," she said, with common complaints being pets destroying furniture, defecating inside, or ripping up flooring when alone.

"They just need love and attention, someone who will look out for them and teach them right from wrong," Begbie said.

To access the online auction, visit www.facebook.com/SnowflakeMeadows53.



Highlander news

Salamander Ponds trails summer 2027

By Mike Baker

Surrounded by friends and invited guests at their 354-acre private land reserve off Tom Bolton Road in Minden on Friday (Nov. 20), Bill Switzer and Nan Shuttleworth said it was a "dream come true" turning the property over to the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT).

The transfer took place earlier this month, with Switzer saying he hopes the public gets as much enjoyment out of the property as he has when it opens next summer.

Switzer said he had no idea there was such a strong presence of salamanders – small amphibians capable of regenerating lost limbs - residing on the property until a chance run in with the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) several years ago.

While walking the property one day, he found an abandoned briefcase, which belonged to a staff member at the ROM. Calling to find out why it was there, Switzer said he learned the person was up here studying salamanders.

HHLT executive director, Dave Newnham, confirmed the land trust plans to install a six-kilometre hiking trail system, which he said will be complete by mid-2027. It will be known as Salamander Ponds and features upland hardwood forests, homestead ruins and an ecologically significant wetland.

"There are some existing trails, but we need to enhance them for public use and do all the other things around interpretive signage, wayfinding, maps etc.," Newnham told *The Highlander.*



HHLT executive director, Dave Newnham, and board chair, Todd Hall, with Bill Switzer and Nan Shuttleworth at the Salamander Ponds property Nov. 20. *Photos submitted.*

The addition is part of a long-term plan HHLT has to expand its footprint across the Highlands. Newnham, who joined the non-profit in July, said he's been working with several potential donors – with two additional properties, a 335-acre acquisition in Glamorgan and 850-acre parcel northeast of Drag River, near Algonquin Park, targeted for a 2027 or 2028 opening.

Newnham described last week's event as a "ribbon-joining", meant to symbolize HHLT's commitment to working with the community to increase the number of accessible nature reserves in the County.

While benefitting the environment, Newnham said he feels the addition will also help with local tourism.

"We've spoken to a lot of people around the Lake Kashagawigamog area, businesses like the Haliburton Post House and Bonnie View Inn, and they're excited. They think this will be really great for their guests and may help attract more visitors to the area," he said.

HHLT has also expanded its partners in conservation program, which sees private landowners work alongside the non-profit to protect more ecologically significant parcels of land. In the past year, HHLT has increased its capacity by almost 50 per cent, growing from 50 partners to 73.

To help manage this growth, Newnham said he's part of a 13-member strong coalition of land trusts that met in Ottawa for the first time last week.

Brought together by the Centre for Land Conservation (CLC), the 'building capacity for conservation impact' pilot will see participants split more than $3 million in funding to strengthen fundraising, community engagement and operations.

Newnham said HHLT is receiving $120,000 over three years, to help sustain two new staff positions. Alongside funding, participants will also take part in a peer learning cohort and receive advice and mentorship from CLC.

"Each land trust has its own unique geography and things they're dealing with in their own areas, but there are ways to learn from one another – it's an exciting opportunity for HHLT," Newnham said.

The organization is in the midst of its annual holiday fundraiser, which runs until Dec. 5. Newnham said HHLT is hoping to raise $25,000, which will go towards trail development and maintenance.

"It's one thing to build capacity, but another thing entirely to steward and protect it once you've taken it on," he said. "There are hazards that need to be taken care of on some of our properties, but we also need to create signage and parking, which are big costs."

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Editorial opinion

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Breath of fresh air



By Lisa Gervais

Pondering Tuesday's County of Haliburton inaugural meeting, I did wonder who would be named warden for the remainder of 2026 and much of 2027.

Traditionally, County councillors have rotated the position among the four mayors – although that changed during COVID-19 with Algonquin Highland's mayor Liz Danielsen serving a lengthy term, before handing the chain of office to Highlands East's mayor Dave Burton.

With Danielsen and Burton back, I thought one of the two may get the nod this time around. The only other returning County councillor was Dysart et al deputy mayor, Walt McKechnie, but he had never shown interest in the warden's chair.

With the rest being newcomers: Dysart et al mayor Greg Bishop, Minden Hills mayor Tammy McKelvey and deputy mayor Ivan Ingram, Danielsen's deputy, Don Embree, and Burton's second in command, Angela Lewis, I was not sure we would see much in the way of change in the top political position.

So, I was somewhat surprised to learn that Bishop had been acclaimed.

Surprised … but pleased.

Not to knock Danielsen or Burton for their years as warden – indeed, they may return to the chair one day – but having someone new is a breath of fresh air.

Bishop has a steep learning curve as both mayor of Dysart et al, and now, County warden, but I don't doubt he is up for the challenge. Bishop may not have chaired a council meeting prior to this week, but he certainly knows his way around municipal politics. He has appeared as a delegate before countless councils in his career. He knows how municipal politics operate.

Bishop brings more than 40 years of experience in land surveying and municipal adjudication to the table. As his campaign website has pointed out, his deep roots in Haliburton have given him a unique perspective on infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and the need for affordable housing.

His involvement in community organizations and the knowledge gained through his work has prepared him to be a strong, positive voice at the council table. He is dedicated to advocating for Dysart and the County as a whole, ensuring the voices of our community are heard in every decision.

I've said it before in this space; we are at a crucial crossroads in the history of Haliburton County. The Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) will soon deliver a report to County council about next steps in its affordability and governance review. Some councillors have already expressed a desire to delay taking any action for another year – allowing them to complete one budget cycle. And, yet, at the same time, we are already hearing from municipal treasurers and mayors about the difficulties with these upcoming budgets due to external costs, such as an 11 per cent increase in OPP billing. Something has to give.

There are also five new County councillors who need to get up to speed very quickly on not just the EORN work but everything else that comes with governing at the County table.

All of this requires experience and strong leadership, and I think Bishop is the person for the job.

HUMANS OF HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS

Not a job for ski hill dad

By Susan Tromanhauser

Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life. This adage confirms Mike Zapfe has made good choices; the Eagle Lake resident now calls the top of Sir Sam's Ski/Ride his office.

Originally from Grimsby, Zapfe attended Carleton University while working in the front office of the Ottawa Senators during their inaugural season. To Zapfe, it was an adventure, with access to wander around the arena and get a front row seat to the game behind the game.

With his university education and the business lessons learned from the launch of an NHL team, he was the perfect fit for his next job – a beer company representative, where he learned marketing skills. His package of marketing and business experience prepared him to open his own marketing company in Oakville. He soon had accounts such as PGA Canada, Iron Man North America and Child Find. The work was so interesting someone walked into his office and bought the company.

With time on his hands, the life-long hockey player decided to take up skiing, becoming a regular at Glen Eden Ski Club near Milton. "I was like, holy hell this is so much fun. I'd like to work in this industry." Zapfe decided to be a ski instructor.

Living in Burlington, Zapfe spent weekends at his parents' cottage. When his folks originally purchased the Eagle Lake property, Zapfe was a teenager and did not appreciate the area. However, as an adult, he came to understand the beauty of the Highlands and now describes the city as "too busy and everyone's too wound up."

During a weekend visit at Sir Sam's, Angela Bishop, then co-owner of the ski hill, approached Zapfe and mentioned she heard he was a ski instructor and offered him a position. Zapfe told Bishop, he would love to relocate to Haliburton, but there was one hitch - Zapfe's wife had a job in downtown Toronto. As Zapfe tells the story, "the universe works in a strange way, Sunday night, we're driving home debating (a move to the Highlands) and Monday morning she came home at lunch - she got laid off." The decision was made.

Zapfe is now entering his 19th season at Sir Sam's as the athletic director. He oversees the ski school, rentals and safety on the hill. He is outside getting so much exercise he doesn't need a gym membership. His wife returned to school and obtained a diploma in Geographic Information Systems from Fleming College, and now works for the County collecting, analyzing and managing map information. The couple built their own home on a lot beside his parent's cottage.



Mike Zapfe. *Submitted.*

Zapfe does not have children of his own, instead viewing the ski school students as his offspring. In turn, they call him "ski hill dad." He likes the fact "people that come to the resort are on vacation and everyone's just happy to be here." But Zapfe is probably the happiest of all - after all, his job is not a job.

THEHIGHLANDER.CA

Editorial opinion

LETTERS

A sport for everyone

Dear editor,

I would like to thank Mike Baker for his excellent article, 'keeping fit and filling social battery on the court', published Nov. 19.

It's wonderful to see *The Highlander* shining a light on pickleball and the growing popularity of a sport that has so much to offer people of all ages and abilities.

Pickleball is an accessible, enjoyable way for people to stay physically active, improve their co-ordination, balance and cardiovascular health, and enjoy a little friendly competition along the way.

Just as important, it's a great way to bring people together. In a world where so many of us spend our days behind screens, opportunities to get out, meet new people, build friendships and enjoy some genuine social interaction is increasingly valuable. Pickleball provides exactly that.

It's also a sport that breaks down generational barriers. Younger and older players can share the same court, learn from one another and enjoy the game together. You don't need to be particularly athletic, have years of sporting experience or invest a fortune in equipment to get started.

Whether you're looking to improve your fitness, challenge yourself competitively, combat social isolation or simply find something fun to do, pickleball ticks a lot of boxes.

With participation continuing to grow across Canada, it's encouraging to see opportunities to continue playing through winter in the Highlands. There's also a great community of players on outdoor courts through summer, helping the sport to flourish locally.

Hopefully, the article inspires a few more people to pick up a paddle and give it a try.

Jean Taylor
Algonquin Highlands

A touching story

Dear editor,

What a pleasure to see Lisa Gervais' byline on an article in *The Globe and Mail* on Thursday, Nov. 19: 'A backpack goes on when the hiker is gone'.

Tracy Lloyd's effort to hike the Camino trail in 2017 was stopped after 300 kilometres by an aggressive recurrence of her breast cancer. After Tracy's death in 2018, her father, Dave, was unsure what to do with her backpack. Eventually, he offered it on the Slow Strollers on the Camino page he moderates and shared its history, attracting about 200 responses. He gave it to another cancer patient, who took it back to the Camino and then invited applications for a new carrier.

Tracy's backpack has now become the heart of a sisterhood of nine women who have carried it all over the world, each one passing it on to another woman. Lisa's very touching, thoughtful article tells this wonderful story beautifully. Bravo.

Susan Q. Wilson
Albany, Australia

Elections

Dear editor,

I don't understand why an all-candidates meeting is packed. Do the people have a warm, fuzzy feeling with a possible change if they vote?

Since the local candidates are usually picked, isn't it more of the same? Couldn't an outside candidate bring in new ideas?

May the electorate take a course in politics to understand it. The only feeling I ever have is a cold jagged one as the politicians only think of their salary pensions and severance.

Since the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the elected representatives have no legal obligation to their constituents, why bother voting?

Winston E. Ralph
Bancroft

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Tom Dibblee sent this image in of an Eastern Wolf. He took the photo Sept. 14 near Loon Lake, Haliburton, from the safety of his car.



SEND IN YOUR PHOTO OF THE WEEK AND LETTERS

editor@thehighlander.ca

Highlander business





Lisa Irvine pictured outside of Crust Bakery & Deli on Nov. 19. *Photo by Adam Frisk*

Home-baking meets hearty lunches



By Adam Frisk
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

For the past 15 or so years, Lisa Irvine has been baking for family, friends, neighbours and strangers from her home in Haliburton. On Friday (Nov. 27), she will finally get a proper storefront.

Crust Bakery & Deli will open its doors tomorrow, inside a former furniture store on Haliburton village's Highland Street. The store is a joint passion project for Irvine and her husband, Sean.

"I've made treats for people I know, people I don't know over the years, and my husband has always been like, 'just open a bakery,'" Irvine told *The Highlander* last week. "And then I've, over the years, wanted him to open a deli. So I thought, well, someone's just got to do it."

And the name reflects both halves of the shop. Irvine said Sean pushed for the name Crust because he's convinced his wife will become famous for her pie crusts. It also happens to work well for crusty bread and deli-style sandwiches.

The couple met while studying culinary management at Fanshawe College in London, Ont., before moving to Sean's hometown of Haliburton. Irvine, who grew up in the southwestern Ontario city, admitted that it took her about a year to adjust to living in the Highlands, but then she fell in love with the area.

"I was like, 'oh, this place is heavenly," she said. "And I never wanted to leave."

The Irvines are building the menu around year-round locals and the weekday lunch rush, with plans to scale back the sweets slightly in January to focus on hearty winter deli grub.

For now, the deli counter will start small, Irvine said. Sean is pulling double duty with being meat manager at Todd's Independent and helping get the new shop up and running.

"I do the bakery, he does the deli," Irvine said. "I'm very much the baker, he's very much the cook."

In the kitchen, don't expect to see massive commercial equipment. Irvine starts at 4:30 a.m., and begins her day by mixing everything from scratch, in small batches with countertop KitchenAid mixers. And because she does all the baking, the afternoon kitchen hours go towards prepping for the next day. Once a tray sells out, that's it until tomorrow.

Regulars can expect to see scones, brownies, magic bars, lemon Bundt cake, and Irvine's own long-perfected chocolate chip cookie recipe, along with cinnamon buns, butter tarts, and pies on weekends.

"We're not a trend bakery," she said. "I just want people to know you can come here and it's always consistent and good and quality and delicious."

The front of the house will be operated by staff members Karen Lytle, Karen Rivard, and Irvine's daughter, Olivia. Wall benches and three tables will offer space to sit and eat, and a high-top table is planned for the front window once the opening dust settles.

Down the road, Irvine plans to launch a Crust community box, where customers can nominate a neighbour "who has been outstanding in the community" for a free box of treats.

Crust Bakery & Deli at 183 Highland St. is open Monday to Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Face of Fuel for Warmth keeps splitting

By Mike Baker

It's a brisk, mid-November morning and while most in the Highlands are snuggled up in a warm bed, Dan Farnell is milling about his 285-acre property on Puffer Road in Minden, organizing freshly-split wood for another home delivery.

It's a routine he's grown accustomed to. Joining County-based charity Fuel for Warmth in 2022, Farnell has taken lead of the organization's wood donation program. In the years since, he estimates visiting hundreds of Highlands homes – bringing hope to people's doorsteps in their hour of need.

Accumulatively, he's put in north of 1,000 hours of volunteer time, with no signs of slowing down. In fact, with demand booming, Farnell said he's busier than ever.

By Nov. 6, he'd already delivered a truckload of wood to 42 households – more than half of the 74 loads he dropped off for the entire 2025-26 winter season. He credited the increased early capacity on a new $30,000 automated wood processor Fuel for Warmth purchased this year, which chops and splits logs far quicker than Farnell ever could by hand.

"Last year, it would take me four days to get through one bush cord. But now, from scratch, I can do one in about two hours," Farnell said. "The splitter is a gamechanger. Once we got it going over the summer, it was splitting wood quicker than we could stack it."

While a hefty investment, Farnell said the machine should pay for itself within a few years. In the past, Fuel for Warmth was paying for the bulk of its wood – some already split, but most large logs dropped off at Farnell's property. There are regular donations, too – some coming from Farnell, who estimates felling 200 hardwood trees – maples and oaks - on his property over the summer.

Most of those will be left to dry out over the winter, with Farnell saying he's learned to leave untreated logs for about a year before chopping them up.



Dan Farnell has been volunteering with Fuel for Warmth for four years, delivering wood to people across Haliburton County. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

"It's all a learning curve. I started cutting down in the spring and tried splitting them, but the sap was just running everywhere," Farnell said. "Now, over the next couple of months, I'm just trying to get ahead, get more stock up to cover people through winter."

Households who qualify for assistance are allowed four loads of wood each season, Farnell said.

He points to dozens of tote cages scattered across his property, each one filled with split wood and covered with whatever scrap Farnell could find, mostly plywood, to keep the elements out. They'll be empty by the end of the year, he figures.

Farnell worked alone, mostly, for the first couple of years but now has a helper – Matthew Douglas**.** Having a partner is a big help, Farnell said. He recalls how he got involved, assisting former volunteer Barkley Cooney**.** That was right after the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Since then, the need has increased so much. I'd say I'm doing triple the deliveries now from when I started," he said.

The seriousness of situations he's finding people in has ramped up, too.

"One of the worst I've seen was an older guy living in a trailer in the bush – he was about ready to give up," Farnell said, noting a neighbour called on his behalf. "The snow was three feet deep in his driveway. He hadn't been out all winter. There wasn't even a footpath down to the place."

The neighbour helped pack snow down using his truck, but Farnell said the closest he could get was 200 feet from the trailer. Other neighbours quickly arrived to help unload.

"I've also seen people living in carports with a wood stove in it, with a hole cut in the wall acting as a chimney. People get really creative when it's a matter of survival," Farnell added.

He's still improving his new process – Farnell said he's looking for an old hay conveyer or grain auger to keep sawdust away from the processor when cutting. He said some extra bodies to help stack on cutting days also wouldn't go amiss.

Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Fuel for Warmth's executive director, Sue Waite. Asked about Farnell's contributions, Waite indicated the charity couldn't do all it does without him.

"He's just a fabulously amazing person – he's out there every season helping people as much as he can. He's really the face of Fuel for Warmth," Waite said.

The charity held its annual Highlands Christmas Shindig fundraiser at the Haliburton Legion Saturday (Nov. 21), with the community bringing in $7,000 to go with the $61,832 Waite has received from 64 sponsors – a new record total.

"Shindig was a great success. We want to thank all those that provided items for our silent auction and a special thank you to all who volunteered their time to help pull everything together," Waite said. "This will go a long way in keeping our neighbours warm this winter."

As well as wood deliveries, the charity also provides propane and heating oil to families, while assisting people with disconnected hydro lines. Anyone needing help, or wanting to pitch in financially, or with their time, can contact Waite at 705-854-9208.







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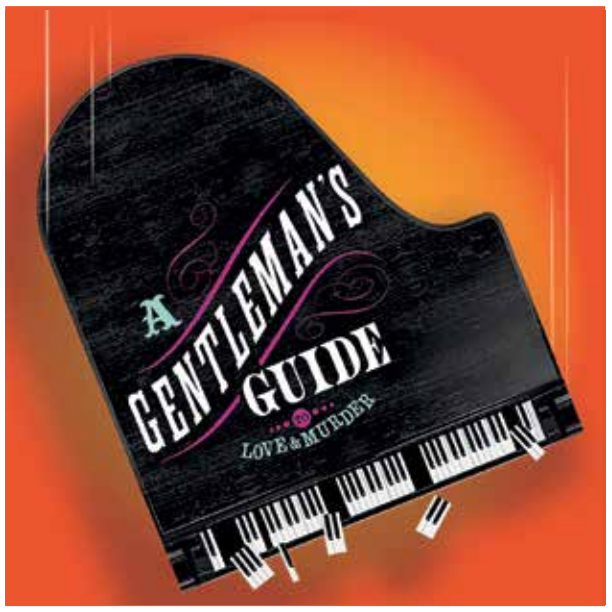

July 5 - 13

Monty Navarro is eighth in line for an earldom. What are his chances of actually inheriting? Pretty good, if he's willing to knock off everyone who stands in his way.



July 14 - 16

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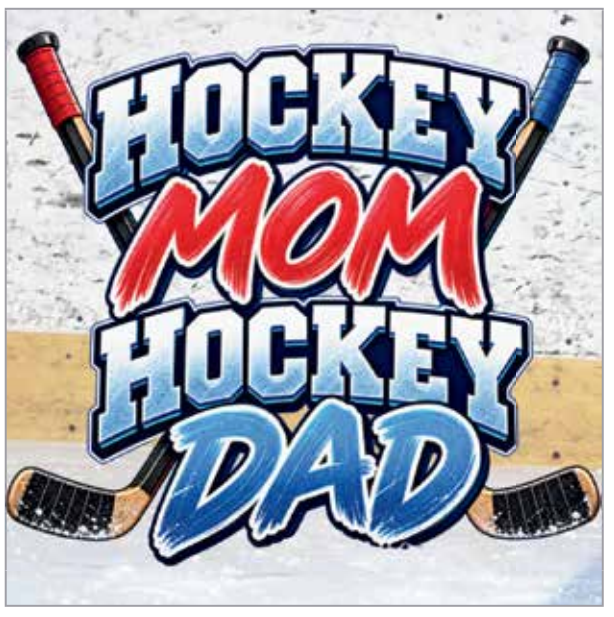

July 20 - 25

Two lonely single parents find the best and worst in themselves while watching their kids play minor hockey – and falling in love.



July 30 - August 6

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Junior highlanders





Beaming with pride

Five young Haliburton Gymnastics athletes “amazed” coaches at their first-ever competition in Bracebridge Nov. 14-15, with three bringing medals and ribbons back to the Highlands for their displays in bars, beam, vault and floor events. Coach, Kathy Judson, said Nora Metcalfe “dazzled the judges with her routines” at the 39th annual Muskoka Classic Gymnastics Competition and scored five ribbons in the Level 2 Age 7-8 category; Amelia Metcalfe scooped two medals – one in beam and the other uneven bars - in the Level 2 Age 9-A category; with Naia Hicks scoring the same - medals in each of the beam and uneven bar events in the Level 2 Age 9-B group. June and Hadley Judson also competed hard in Level 4 and 5 competition, though didn’t place. “The team will continue to work hard towards the next two competitions in February and March,” Judson said. *(Mike Baker)*

Top: June Judson during Level 4 uneven bars competition, with coach Kathy Judson providing support. Bottom: Nora Metcalfe, Naia Hicks and Amelia Metcalfe show off the hardware and celebrate after the awards ceremony. *Photos submitted.*

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Marshalling
Bill Frost, Kathryn Frost, Jaylin Frost, Will Craftchick

Traffic and Parking Controllers
James Lawr, Bob Park, Matt Oulette, Renee Griffith,
Tommy and Teddy Griffith, Our friends at Haliburton United Church
Sunbelt Rentals, Ben, Kevin, and Scott,
Tammy Rea of Sticks and Stones for the video record
Many thanks to all those who entered with their lights, music,
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Remembering the Santa Float builders
Ken Noble, Jim Meadows and Sam Charlton

Thanks
To Andy Salvatori and Family for donating the tree and the Dysart Fire Dept. volunteers and Emmerson Lumber for felling and erecting the tree.

To Anthony and Juliane VanLieshout for the location and hydro for the tree.

To Gord and Leanne Kidd for the carol Sing and the Tree Lighting ceremony.

To Canoe FM & Moose Fm, The Echo and Highlander and the Post Office friends for all your help!

To those donors for helping with the parade cost, and anyone
I may have missed!

From Jim Frost, Parade Coordinator and Downtown Haliburton Bia and the Haliburton and District Lions Club



Highlander events







For the kids

Abbey Gardens has transformed its grounds into a winter wonderland for Highlands families, offering a variety of free kids' crafts and self-guided tours of Christmas light displays on the property. Staffer, Cara Steele, said it's always a great way to kick off the festive season, with children often amazed by the thousand-plus bulb demonstration. The event is also running Nov. 28 and Dec. 5.

Above: Jasmine, Olivia, Harvey and Joseph Brignell enjoyed family time decorating cookies. Top right: Five-year-old Lincoln Lowrie decorates a cookie with the help of mom, Erin. Bottom right: Alyssa Hinkel and Cara Steele welcomed guests to the Christmas market. *Photos by Mike Baker.*



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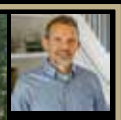

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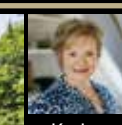

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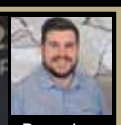

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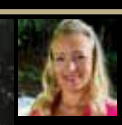

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Highlander events









The sound of music

The Highlands Chamber Orchestra hosted an evening concert at the Pinestone Resort & Conference Centre on Saturday (Nov 21) evening.The performance, titled Resistance and Rebellion, featured several anti-war instrumentals, including music from *Seven Years in Tibet, War March of the Priests* and *Star Wars.*

Top: The Highlands Chamber Orchestra performs in front of a full audience at the Pinestone. Bottom left: Cellist Bethany Houghton performs a solo. Bottom middle: Conductor Dan Manley motions to a musician. Bottom right: Houghton smiles before the start of Saturday's performance. *Photos by Adam Frisk.*

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MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

• Don't miss the final week of Letters to the Earth: Between Despair and Hope. This mixed media group exhibition curated by Carmel Brennan and featuring 26 artists, will be on display in the Agnes Jamieson Gallery until November 28. The Gallery is open Tuesday – Saturday from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM. All are welcome. Admission is by donation.

• The UFO Craft group meets in the Welch Room on Friday, November 27 from 1:00 – 3:00 PM.

• The Agnes Jamieson Gallery will be closed from December 1-4 for exhibit installation.

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

CEMETERIES

Minden Hills Cemeteries are closing for the season on Monday November 30, 2026.

DELAYED OPENING – DECEMBER 2, 2026

The following facilities will have **delayed opening hours on Wednesday, December 2, 2026:**

• Township of Minden Hills Municipal Office (7 Milne St.);

• S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena – Administration Office (55 Parkside St.); and

• Minden Hills Fire - Administration Office (12418 Hwy. 35).

All the noted facilities will open later than normal to provide an opportunity for Municipal Staff to participate in a Holiday Staff Appreciation Breakfast. **Business will resume as normal at 9:45 a.m. on this date.** We appreciate your patience and understanding regarding this matter.

*Please note our Emergency Services will respond as needed, the public will have access to the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial facilities, and Waste Facilities will operate per normal hours.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (County Council Chambers, 12 Newcastle St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

• November 26 – Regular Council Meeting (9:00 a.m.)
• December 10 – Regular Council Meeting (9:00 a.m.)

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

REPORTING ISSUES

Reporting issues such as road condition or maintenance needs can be done by emailing roads@mindenhills.ca or calling 705-286-1260 ext. 500 Monday-Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. After hours emergencies can be reported by calling 1-866-856-3247.

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Highlander events







Winter village fun

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre turned into a winter village for post-parade festivities on Saturday (Nov. 21). Kids of all ages were invited back to the historic centre to enjoy face painting, live music, outdoor games, and, of course, a visit with Santa Claus.

Top: Cooper Whitehead rhymes off his Christmas wish list while sitting on Santa's knee at the cultural centre. Middle: Rylee and Sam play tug-of-war with other kids following the parade. Bottom: Gord Kidd performs some holiday classics at the church on the cultural centre grounds. *Photos by Adam Frisk*

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Gifts for Kids & Holiday Hampers

Need a hand this holiday season? Sign up with your local food bank by Dec. 4th!

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Deadline is Dec. 4th

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Call between 9am - 3pm

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705-243-2419
Registration starts Nov. 2
Call between 10am - 5pm

Haliburton
705-457-3010
Registration Starts Nov. 20
Call between 11am - 1pm

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THOSE OTHER MOVIES

Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion
ONCE UPON A TIME IN A CINEMA
Thursday, December 10 4:15 & 7:15

In a small-town in Ireland, a cinema owner battles a series of disasters while juggling personal turmoil and the chaos of a packed Friday night crowd. This is a witty, heartfelt and uplifting film - a love letter to the magic of cinema.

www.ThoseOtherMovies.com

ADMIT ONE
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Santa comes to town

Hundreds of residents and visitors lined Haliburton's Highland Street for the annual Santa Claus parade on Friday (Nov. 20) evening. The night kicked off with holiday carols, hot chocolate and the tree-lighting ceremony at the Village Barn. Dozens of floats then made their way down the main street with locals taking in the holiday spirit.

Top: Hudson Ideson, Kale McCallum-Sims, and Jack Clement have their snacks ready as they wait for Santa Claus to make an appearance. Middle left: A performer with Razzamataz - Theatre for Wonder is all smiles during the Santa Claus parade. Middle right: The parade included some horses. Bottom left: Tom Dermody holds his grandson, Finn Stonehouse, during the tree-lighting ceremony. Bottom right: Liisa Hebburn and Glenn Scott pose for a photo with their dog, Dakota, before the start of the parade. *Photos by Adam Frisk.*

Highlander events













Balmy day for a parade

Minden's annual Santa Claus parade kicked off the Christmas spirit under balmy conditions on Saturday (Nov. 21). Hundreds of people lined Bobcaygeon Road to get a glimpse of Santa and all of his helpers. The parade featured dozens of floats, marching bands, horses and fire trucks while people enjoyed the unseasonably mild temperature.

Top left: Santa Claus waves to hundreds of people who lined the streets of downtown Top right: A saxophone shines during the parade. Middle left: Bagpipers perform. Middle right: Floats and horses make their way through the parade route. Bottom left: Mason Gordon and his kids, Lennox, Magnus and Tavish sit on some lawn chairs as they anxiously await Santa Claus. Bottom right: Ben Choy, Maizie Mulvaney, Jenn Cleary, Brian, Nicole, Mike and Finn Mulvaney, got into the festive spirit. *Photos by Adam Frisk.*

Highlander sports

Girls' Red Hawks make basketball history

By Mike Baker



The Hal High Red Hawks junior girls' basketball team made history last week, winning a first-ever COSSA championship. *Photo submitted.*

After watching his young history-makers secure a first-ever Central Ontario Secondary School Association (COSSA) championship last week, Hal High Red Hawks junior girls' basketball team coach, Hunter Smith, believes the big win will spark renewed local interest in the sport for years to come.

The squad enjoyed undefeated runs to both the Kawartha 'A' championship and regional COSSA title this month, beating the Norwood Knights in both finals.

Smith said it was a major accomplishment, with the girls' win being Hal High's second at a COSSA basketball event – the last one coming in 1977, 49 years ago, when the senior boys brought home the regional title.

"Incredibly proud," Smith said, when asked how he felt when the final buzzer went in Norwood Nov. 17, securing a 25-21 victory. "These girls have done something no other team has been able to do at Hal High. They made history."

It wasn't all plain sailing for the team, with Smith saying they had to overcome a ton of adversity throughout the season. He pointed to a 50-point loss to Peterborough's Holy Cross in October as a major turning point.

From there, the girls won out in their final two games of the regular season, finishing with a 5-3 record. They beat Norwood in a tiebreaker to determine the first seed, then went undefeated at Kawarthas and COSSA.

"I think that loss really put everything into perspective on how we were going to be successful as a team," Smith said. "We focused on tightening up our defence and just being really difficult to play against."

The Red Hawks came from behind in both finals, showing great spirit to hang in – especially in a hostile environment in Norwood for COSSA. After retaking the lead heading into the final minute, the game was won by Brooklyn Bjelis, who sunk a two-pointer to halt Norwood's momentum.

The team was led by co-captains Kinzey Bull and Lyla Degeer, who provided great leadership and most of the offence.

"Whatever they did, everyone else followed and bought in," Smith said, noting there was no drama as all players put their egos to one side for the good of the team. "We couldn't have asked for a better group to coach. They were so respectful and committed, and extremely coachable. Not one of them ever complained about playing time."

With five Grade 9s on the roster, Smith said there's a great foundation to build on for next season – when the girls will look to defend their title. He isn't sure yet if he and fellow coach, Sam Little, will be back on the bench, noting they filled in this year for Mike Rieger, who has spent years rebuilding the program.

"We haven't really had a dominant girls' team ever in basketball – all the credit goes to Mike, who has brought this sport to the forefront over the last four or five years," Smith said. "Girls wanted to play – we had 21 try out, which was a first. But it's going to be even bigger now. Girls will want to be part of a winning team."

The coach said all 14 champions should be proud of their efforts. The team featured: Bjelis, Bull, Degeer, Cara Hughey, Elyse Kernohan, Tenley Logan, Evelyn Mardus, Cheyenne Mathura , Adiya Mills, Maya Parish, Claire Ryalen, Allie Ryan, Anika Suke, and Skye Upton.

Smith thinks it's a nice touch that the junior girls have accomplished something their male counterparts never have. There will be a celebration at the school marking their achievement.

"I feel like in sports, the girls are always compared to the boys and what previous boys teams have done, so it's nice for them to have something the boys have never done," Smith said. "They're the talk of the school right now. They've put themselves on the map and all other teams on notice."

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Home of the Highland Storm



The Storm's Reed Brown advances with the puck in Minden. *Photo by Adam Frisk.*

Storm make Silver Stick semi-finals in Minden

On Saturday, Nov. 21, the U15LL Casey's Water Well and Geothermal Highland Storm took on the Almaguin Ice Devils in the Silver Stick tournament in Minden.

The Storm needed to win the game not only to clinch first in their pool, but to punch a ticket to the semi-finals.

The game started off extremely strong for the Storm with a quick goal by Jaxon Demerchant only eight seconds into the game.

There was no more scoring until the third period due to great defensive work from Evelyn Mardus, Rowan Little, Blair Fisher, Bobby Walker and Nathan Hill. Storm goalie, Liam Scheffee, put on a clinic by stopping everything that came his way.

In the third period, Almaguin tied it on the powerplay after a scramble play in front of Scheffee with 6:51 left in the game.

The Storm never gave up and regained the lead just over a minute later with a great passing play. Little dished the puck to Brayden Collins who then fed Maddex Reynolds in the slot for the game-leading goal.

The Storm then sealed the deal with 31 seconds left on an empty net goal from Reed Brown.

The win put the Storm in first place with a 2-0-1 record. They went undefeated and went on to the semi-finals where they fought hard but just fell short in making it to the finals. *(Submitted)*

STARS of the WEEK



EVELYN MARDUS

Evelyn was the backbone of the team. She always gives it 110 per cent and never gives up.



LIAM SCHEFFEE

Liam found his stride in this tournament and was able to get his first shutout of the year.



CHARLIE MAINPRIZE

Charlie always gives 100 per cent. He is first at the rink and last to leave. He is respected by every player and member of the coaching staff.

Photos by Tim Tofflemire

SCOREBOARD

Nov. 16

U15 yellow Minden Pharmasave vs Orono 15-1 W

U15 blue Casey's Water Wells & Geothermal vs Sturgeon 8-2 W

U15 The Pepper Mill Steak and Pasta House vs Otonobee 16-0 W

Nov. 17

U13 Curry Chevrolet vs Kawartha 8-1 W

Nov. 18

U9MD vs Kawartha 4-2 L

Nov. 19

U11 Minden Carquest vs Sturgeon 9-0 L

U13 Curry Chevrolet vs Mariposa 4-2 W

Nov. 20

U15 Casey's Water Well & Geothermal vs Brock 11-3 W

Nov. 21

U11 Minden Carquest vs Brock 10-5 L

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What's on

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Branch 129 Haliburton

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.

Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden

Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday to Friday with full menu and daily special including liver lovers' Tuesday.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 9:30 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
Weekly activities:
Karaoke: every other Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 10 a.m. to noon, Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Thursday, Nov. 26: open 2 to 10 p.m. HHHS social recreation 10 a.m., karaoke at 7 p.m.
Friday, Nov. 27: open 2 to 11 p.m. Fish and chips 5-7 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 28: open 2 to close. Meat draw 3 p.m.
Sunday, Nov. 29: open 1-5 p.m.
Monday, Nov. 30: open 7-10 p.m. Painting class at 10 a.m., darts at 7 p.m., free games night.
Tuesday, Dec. 1: Closed
Wednesday, Dec. 2: open 2 to 10 p.m. Darts at 2 p.m., ladies auxiliary dinner 5-6:30 p.m.
Upcoming event: New Year's Eve dinner dance Dec, 31 at 7 p.m., with chicken cordon bleu and shrimp. Tickets are $30 in advance, or $35 at the door.

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

Branch 441 Kinmount

Mondays: Bid euchre at 1 p.m.
Tuesdays: Closed
Wednesdays: Mixed darts at 7:30 p.m.
Thursdays: Closed
Fridays: Clubroom opens at 4 p.m. Bingo, doors open at 5 p.m. with play beginning at 6:45 p.m. Supper specials starting at 5 p.m.
Saturdays: Clubroom opens at 3 p.m. Meat draw at 5:30 p.m.

EVENTS

Nov. 27, 7 p.m. The Hal High drama club and Ctrl-ART-Del presents Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*. Presented in arrangement with Concord Theatricals and adapted for the stage by Ken Ludwig. Performances also running Nov. 28 and 29. Tickets are by donation (recommended $10). Taking place at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion in Haliburton.

Nov. 28, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Wilberforce Heritage Guild is hosting its holiday craft sale at the Lloyd Watson Centre. There will be lots of great items up for grabs, including holiday treats and baked goods, seasonal decorations, handmade gifts and more. Lunch available courtesy of the Wilberforce Legion ladies auxiliary.

Nov. 28, 3-7 p.m. Psychic fair at the Coboconk Legion. Interested vendors can contract Jen at 705-308-8505. The Legion is also hosting a Christmas 'kidpreneur' market for vendors 18 and under Nov. 29 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Nov. 28, 4 p.m. Italian dinner and silent auction fundraiser for Hal High's 2027 Italy trip. At the school cafeteria. There's a silent auction from 4-7 p.m., with pasta dinner from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Tickets are $30, available at the school.

Nov. 28, 4-5:30 p.m. DIY birchwood Christmas tree ornament workshop at the Artist Pantry in Minden. Create a unique ornament for you to take home. Suitable for children and adults. Cost is $20 per person.

Nov. 28, 4-8 p.m. Abbey Gardens is running its 'Holiday Nights' event, inviting the public to stroll the gardens and enjoy all the Christmas lights and decorations. There are kids' crafts and photos with Santa. Also running Dec. 5.

Nov. 29, 2:30-4:30 p.m. The Dorset Lions Club is hosting its first-annual community Christmas social at the Dorset Recreation Centre. There will be crafts for children, photos with Santa, sweet treats and more. Admission is free. All ages welcome.

Nov. 29, 3 p.m. Holiday concert featuring the Highlands Wind Symphony and Highlands Swing Band, with vocals from Jerelyn Craden. Taking place at the Pinestone Resort ballroom. Tickets are $15 for adults, or $30 per family and are available at Minden Pharmasave, Master's Book Store, Redmans Records or by calling 705-457-0455.

Dec. 5, 4-5:30 p.m. Christmas village workshop at the Artist Pantry in Minden. Assemble, paint and decorate your own illuminated festive display. Suitable for adults and children. Cost is $15 per house. There will be a second workshop held Dec. 12.

Dec. 5, 6:30 p.m. Celebrate festive cheer in Wilberforce with caroling around the Christmas tree in the parking lot of Agnew's General Store. There will then be a Christmas open house at the Red Cross Outpost Museum from 7-9 p.m. Join for good cheer, seasonal goodies and hot apple cider.

Dec. 5, 7-11 p.m. The Coboconk Legion is hosting 'Battling Elvis' at the branch. Dinner and show is $50 per person, the show is $25. Seatings at 4:30, 5 and 5:30 p.m. Call Jen for tickets at 705-308-8505.

Have a non-profit event you want advertised? email mike@thehighlander.ca.



MY Haliburton HIGHLANDS
Seniors Active Living Centre

Check out this month's SALC events and activities for residents aged 55+

Games & Cards / Board Games drop-in – various dates in December

December 1, 8 & 15
Senior Skate and Social

December 2, 3 & 8
Tech Help Walk-In Clinic

December 2, 8, 10, 11 & 16
Genealogy for Seniors

December 3, 10 & 17
Breathwork Class

December 4
Senior Paint Class

December 4
Service Canada Clinic

December 7 & 17
Painting Class

December 8 & 22
Senior Cooking Program

December 9 & 19
Needle Felting: Winter Birds

December 12
House Plant Care with a Master Gardener

December 15
SALC Webinar: Christmas Past in the Highlands

December 16
Crafternoon Drop-In



Ontario

Funding for this program has been provided by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility

For full details, visit HaliburtonCounty.ca/SALC or pick up a calendar at a municipal office, library or Legion near you!

Hal high students board Orient Express

By Mike Baker

One of the world's greatest fictional detectives is taking to the stage at Hal High this weekend, with the school's drama club presenting three performances of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express.*

The production will see Hercule Poiroit, played by Sophie Lee, investigate a murder on the famous train that gets stuck in snow en route to Paris, France from Istanbul in Turkey. It's a classic mystery that largely sticks to Christie's novel. It was adapted for stage by Ken Ludwig

"It's just a fun genre – and the story itself has a big legacy. There are lots of different roles the students can get into," said Christine Carr, lead of the Hal High drama club. "It follows the original fairly well. There are some small changes, just in the act of turning it into a play for modern audiences, with a surprise or two."

Carr said this will be the club's fifth production since launching in 2022 – and it's the biggest one yet, with a main cast of 16 students and even more helping behind-the-scenes.

"The art club has done a lot of painting for us; the tech class built pieces for the set. Then, the actual cast, we have some seniors who have been in past shows and some who are completely new to theatre," Carr said. "It's been a huge, school-wide effort."

Auditions began in early September, with a record number of kids turning out. Casting was done by the end of September, with students in rehearsal ever since.



The Hal High drama club is performing three shows of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* Nov. 27-29. *Photo submitted.*

Carr said there's lots of excitement among the cast as opening night looms. The play will run for three shows – Friday and Saturday (Nov. 27-28) at 7 p.m., and Sunday (Nov. 29) at 2 p.m.

"The kids have all the props, costumes and sets together now – everything has come together and they just can't wait to bring everything they've been working on to life," Carr said.

Tickets are $10, with the money supporting the drama club's 2027 production. Carr said the club is entirely self-funded. "So, whatever we make this year will be what we have to spend for next year's performance."

Being her fifth time leading a high school production, Carr said she's been able to witness firsthand the positives of local theatre. Some students have gone on to act elsewhere, study theatre post-secondary, and use their theatre connections to expand their social circles.

"I think arts in schools create a space for students who might not otherwise have one. The drama club is a very safe space for anyone who needs it. It's really important to help these kids gain the confidence to help them figure out who they are or just have fun building this community with other students," Carr said.

"I see a lot of new friend groups come out of drama club and it's really nice seeing the older students welcome the younger ones and becoming role models," she added.

Tickets are available at the door, or in advance through school cash online, if you have a student at the school, or by contacting the main office at 705-457-2950. There is a dinner component on Saturday, starting at 5:30 p.m., with students fundraising for a school trip to Italy in 2027.

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Municipality of Dysart et al

Cultural Resources Committee Community Members Wanted

The Cultural Resources Committee is seeking three community members to join their committee!

Help shape local arts, culture and heritage by joining this volunteer committee, which oversees the Municipal Cultural Plan and advises Council. The committee meets quarterly (February, May, August and November) on the 4th Thursday of the month.

Interested? Email Tamara Wilbee, Chief Administrative Officer twilbee@dysartetal.ca by 12:00.pm. on December 16th.

Learn more: dysartetal.ca/municipal-government/committees

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SKILLED HANDYMAN - Available for renovations, trim, tile, bathroom, deck, basement, flooring and paint. Please call or text Bob at 705-457-6190

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

FOR SALE

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

HELP WANTED

HELP WANTED – Marks Restaurant Minden, Server required. Must be able to work evenings and some weekends. Please drop resumes off in person, email to marksrestaurant@icloud.com or phone 705-286-1818

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. Pleasse call Dan at 905-853-8253

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.

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

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, are you troubled by someone's drinking? Meetings: Monday at 7 p.m. HHHS (Minden Hospital) 6 McPherson Street, North Entrance, follow signs to Board Room. 1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666) al-anon.org All are welcome.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS Admission is free and the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. This meeting is for addicts only. New meeting in Haliburton that meets every Thursday from 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Northland Faith Church, 50 York Street, Unit 10, Haliburton (where Service Ontario used to be) For more information and an online version visit www.cloana.org or call 1-888-811-3887

HELP WANTED

A CALL FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Early ON Child and Family Centre

Join us...
Make a Difference in your community!

We are a non-profit agency that offers programs for children birth to 6 years and their parents, grandparents, and caregivers in the City of Kawartha Lakes and the County of Haliburton.

Volunteer Commitment:

- 2-4 hours per month, includes meeting time
- meetings are held on the last Monday of each month - starting at 5:30 pm
- attending virtually is an option, or mileage is paid to and from Lindsay
- light meal served

www.oeyc.ca

If interested please contact us
705-324-7900 admin@oeyc.ca

Point in Time Centre for Children, Youth and Parents

JOIN OUR TEAM!

Child, Youth & Family Therapist

1 Year Contract to start

- Provides Single Session support via our Quick Access Clinic
- Brief Narrative, Solution Focused Approaches
- Strength based client centered approaches

Registered Social Worker (BSW/MSW, RSW), Psychotherapist (RP) *(or meets the criteria to become registered)*
Valid G driver's license **$64,249-$74,510**

For complete information of Job Description, Qualifications, Experience and Skills please visit our website at www.pointintime.ca

Please send cover letter and resume via e-mail HR@pointintime.ca by December 8, 2026

Point in Time is committed to building an organization that reflects the communities we work with. We encourage applications from members of Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities, LGBTQ+ communities, people with disabilities and members of other equity seeking groups.

Point in Time will provide accommodations during the recruitment process to ensure equal access to applicants with disabilities, upon request of the applicant.



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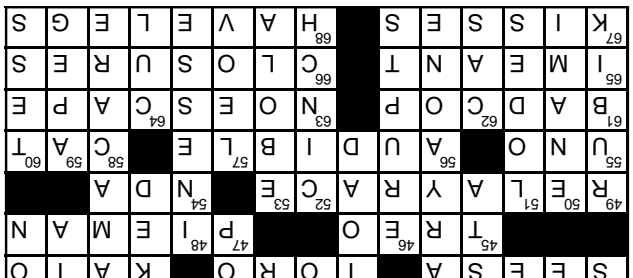

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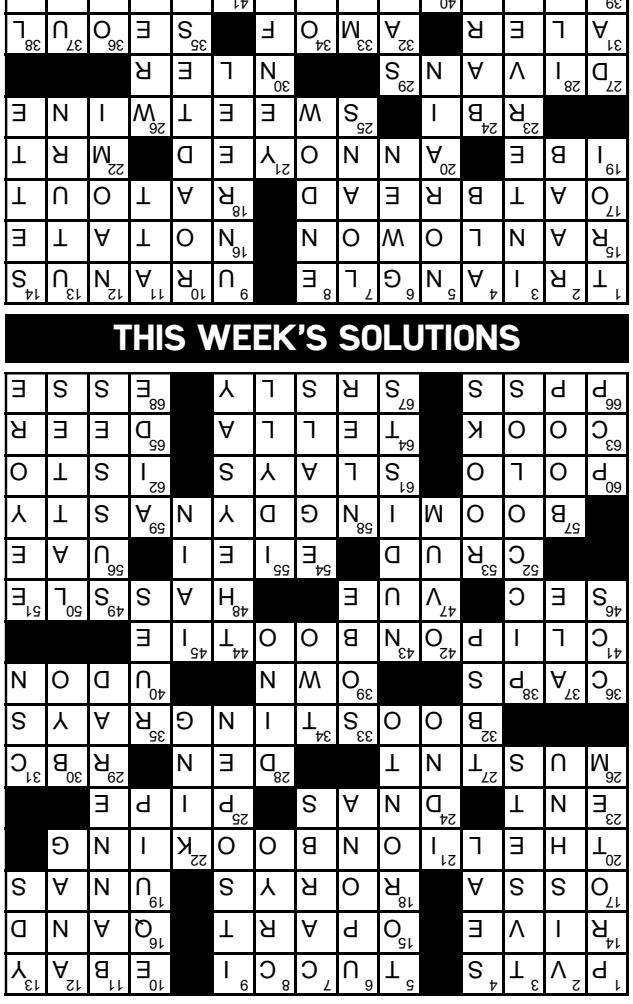

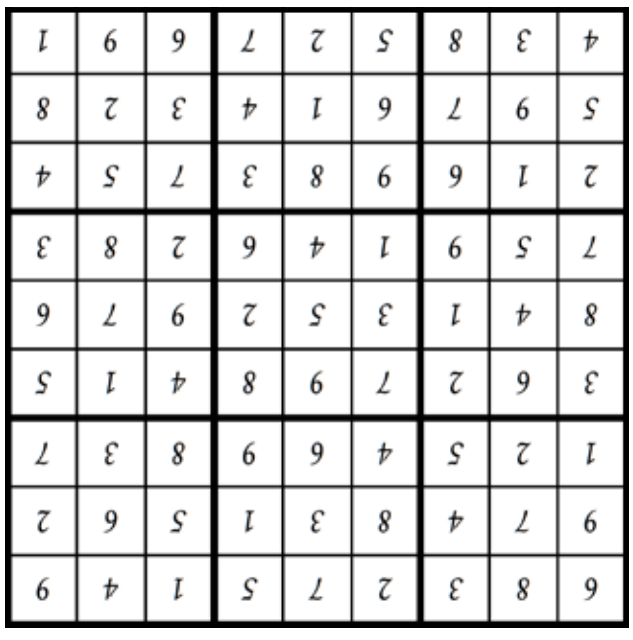

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of

Marie Jeannette Thompson



Passed away peacefully at Extendicare Haliburton on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, with her loving husband of 72 years by her side, in her 93rd year.

Beloved wife of Ken of Haliburton. Dear mother of Ken Jr. and predeceased by her daughter Marion Stacey (2022) (John). Loving gramma of Kristen, Mandy, Katie, Melissa, Derek and great gramma to many great grandchildren. Marie is predeceased by her 5 sisters and 4 brothers. Lovingly remembered by her family and friends.

In keeping with Marie's wishes, cremation has taken place and interment at the Resthaven Memorial Gardens, Scarborough will be held at a later date.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) 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

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

In Loving Memory of

Leslie "Les" Spanger



With heavy hearts, the family of Leslie "Les" Spanger announce his passing on Monday, November 2, 2026, at the age of 72. Les is reunited with his beloved wife and best friend, Shirley Spanger (predeceased Nov. 2025).

Loving father of Micheal (predeceased May 2022), Shannon, and Brandon. Adoring grandfather to Megan, Tristlyn, Cole, Jena, and Evan. Beloved great-grandfather to Ivan and Henry. Les will be deeply missed and forever remembered by his family, friends, extended family, and all who had the chance to know him. Les worked at the Chrysler Trim Plant in Ajax for many years. He was an avid outdoorsman who loved hunting, fishing, and ATV-ing.

Burial & Celebration of Life

Family and close friends are invited to attend the burial on Friday, November 27, 2026, at 1 pm at the **GOODERHAM CEMETERY**; 11006 County Rd 503, Gooderham, ON K0M 1R0. A Celebration of Life will be held the following day on Saturday, November 28, 2026, from 1 - 4 pm at the **ROBERT MCCAUSLAND MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTRE**, 1043 Community Center Rd, Gooderham, ON K0M 1R0. We look forward to coming together to celebrate and honour Les' life. We thank you for your love, support and understanding during this difficult time. As an expression of sympathy, donations to a charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family. Funeral Arrangements have been entrusted to the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME**, 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario K0M 1S0 (705) 457-9209.

Community Funeral Home

In Loving Memory of

Barbara Elizabeth Moore (nee Symons)



Passed away peacefully with her family by her side at the Toronto General Hospital on Tuesday, November 17, 2026, at the age of 73

Loving mother of Julie and her husband Christopher Plessl. Dear sister of Lorrie Symons and Jane Symons. Loving aunt to Kate and her husband Brent Irvine and great aunt to Owen and Eli. Daughter of the late Florence and Don Symons. Fondly remembered by her family and friends. Barbara will be remembered for her many years of nursing at the Extendicare Haliburton. She had a great love of music, spending time with her family and a very generous spirit.

Friends are invited to visit the family at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden K0M 20 on Thursday from 6:00 until 8:00 pm. Then to Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle St., Minden on Friday from 12:00 pm until the time of the Service to Celebrate Barbara's Life at 1:00 pm. Reception to follow at the church (downstairs).

Memorial Donations to Diabetes Canada would be appreciated by the family.

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

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Highlander puzzles

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by Barbara Olson
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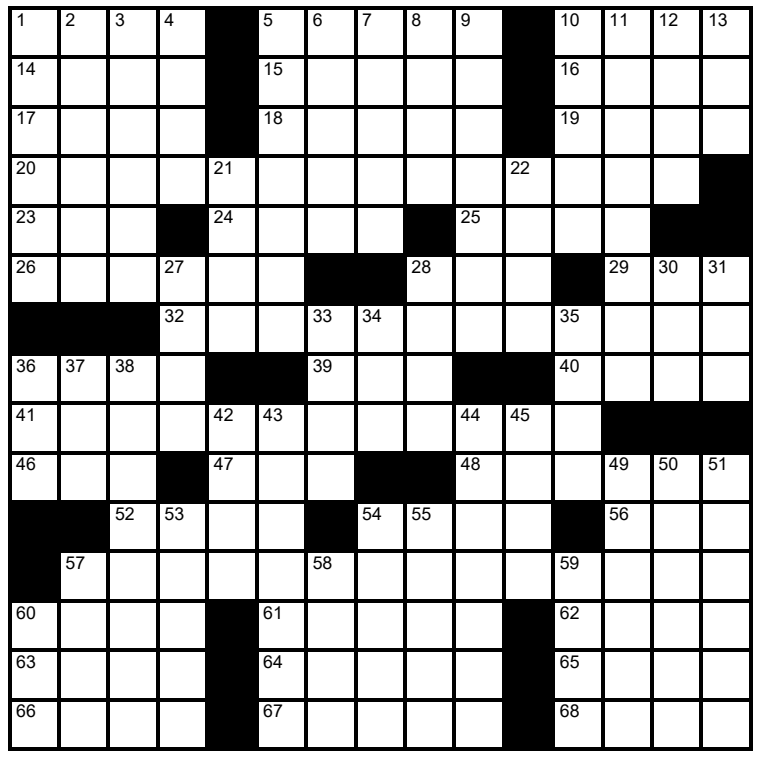

Across

1 Cpl.'s subordinates
5 "The Hunger Games" actor Stanley
10 Cyber shopper's site
14 Split apart
15 Eye-tricking painting style
16 ___ A (post-lecture session)
17 Greek peak
18 Actors Culkin and Calhoun
19 Some, in Sevilla
20 Task for a circus tamer's agent?
23 Tinnitus specialist, for short
24 Strands in a lab?
25 Sherlock costume accessory
26 Shouldn't, but stronger
28 TV's "Dragon's ___"
29 Banking rival of TD
32 Pushing the positive effects of UVs?
36 Some baseball merch
39 No longer owe on
40 Japanese noodles
41 Attachable baby slipper?
46 "Be there in a ___!"
47 Point de ___ (French "opinion")
48 A bunch of red tape, say
52 Caked-on gunk
54 "... farm, ___ O ..." (kid's song)
56 Fed. including Dubai
57 Highly prosperous ruling family of China?
60 "The Gentleman's Sport" played on horseback
61 Leaves them in stitches
62 ":", in a ratio
63 Bake, broil or braise
64 "Don't ___ soul!"
65 Hart of the forest
66 Emailer's second afterthought
67 "For real?", in a text
68 "In ___" (basically)

Down

1 Committee ___ (short-lived group)
2 Four-armed Hindu god
3 Sports bar fixtures
4 Barking swimmer
5 Only Canadian city with streetcars
6 "Once ___ Time in Hollywood" (Pitt film)
7 Marathon runner's "loaded" fare
8 "Freezing" prefix
9 "C'mon in!"
10 Outfit with gear
11 Pitch atop a web page
12 Tops for pots: Abbr.
13 Fabric lgths.
21 Health card fig., e.g.
22 Top deck royal
27 Recipe meas.
28 Fred and Wilma's pet
30 "Booze not provided" letters
31 Band before Young joined, briefly
33 Lizard-logo drink
34 Company composition, some say
35 Streets of Sept-îles
36 Loops in on an email
37 Stout relative
38 Short, high winds
42 Baby egg?
43 Tanners lacking tanlines
44 "Word on the street is ..."
45 Actor Armitage of "Young Sheldon"
49 Figures (out)
50 Frothy hot brews
51 Pooh's friend with a bow on his tail
53 Short-changes
54 French peers
55 Pastoral poem
57 Betty of cartoons
58 Cub or Cardinal, briefly
59 ___-de-camp (military helper)
60 Hallucinogenic drug inits.

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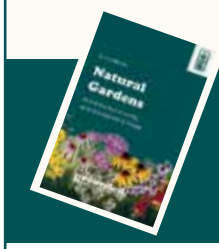

For a free guide to natural gardens in Haliburton County, visit groundedgardens.ca.

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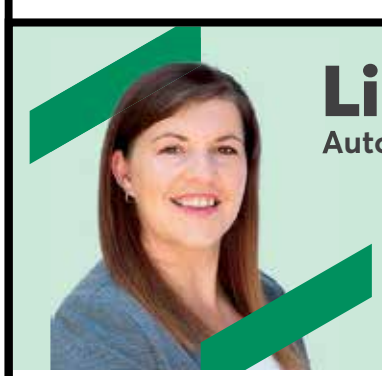

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