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## Community, Courage, and Heart

By Linda Belcourt, Editor, Dec 28, 2025

North Simcoe Springwater News staff and I are so grateful for our volunteer writers who share the stories of the communities they live in, for the advertisers who make this newspaper possible, and for the readers who support local by letting businesses know they "saw it in the Springwater News." We also appreciate the support we receive from our elected officials — it helps keep local voices strong and local dollars circulating right here at home.

I am incredibly proud of our staff and of the many people who have encouraged me to keep going. Community journalism is not always easy,

but it is always worth it when the community rallies behind us. I am especially proud of our regular columnists — Dennis Gannon, Leslie Noonan, Annie Donnelly, Lorrie Norwood, Joanne Nijhuis, Kate Harriers, and Waxy Gregoire — who bring insight, personality, and dedication to every edition. I am also thankful for the letters sent in by readers. Community opinion matters, and those voices help shape the pages of this newspaper.

It takes many hours of research, writing, editing, and layout to produce each issue, and it is rewarding to know how much it means to so many people. You bring people together. You make me

a better editor, and for that, I sincerely thank you.

As we head into the new year, we face some real challenges. Printing costs have risen by more than 25 per cent, and Canada Post has increased rates while reducing service levels. Even so, we remain committed to keeping advertising affordable and to continuing strong coverage of the issues that matter most to our communities. With an election ahead in 2026, readers can also expect thoughtful and engaging editorial as we navigate another important year together.

Thank you for being part of our newspaper family. We look forward to continuing to tell your stories in the year ahead.

  
  
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# To Know Her Was to Love Her



It is with heavy hearts that we share some difficult news with our readers and community. Linda Belcourt, the longtime publisher and guiding heart behind the North Simcoe Springwater News, passed away suddenly and unexpectedly on December 29, 2025.

We recognize that many of you knew Linda personally or worked closely with her over the years. For some, this may be the first time learning of her passing, and we understand this news may come as a shock and bring deep sadness. Linda cared profoundly about this community and the relationships she built with local businesses, organizations, and readers. Her loss is felt deeply across North Simcoe.

In the immediate aftermath of her passing, publication was paused while we attended to urgent personal and business matters. As a result, the January 1 and January 15 editions were not published. We sincerely thank our readers,

advertisers, and contributors for their patience, kindness, and understanding during this very difficult time.

We would like to reassure our community that the North Simcoe Springwater News will continue. As Linda's husband and daughter, we are stepping in to carry forward her work, and we are pleased to confirm that the newspaper will continue on a bi-weekly publication schedule moving forward.

Linda was first introduced to the Springwater News through her employment at the paper during Michael Jacobs' ownership, where her passion for community journalism was first sparked. Although she left the newspaper in the early 2000s to pursue other career ventures, she made the heartfelt decision to return and purchase the business in 2022.

During her 3.5 years of ownership, Linda expanded distribution beyond Springwater to include Midland, Tiny and Penetanguishene, allowing the paper to better serve four North Simcoe communities. She was deeply committed to supporting local businesses, community sports, municipal politics, and grassroots news, and she cherished the relationships she built throughout the region.

Linda also worked tirelessly to improve the quality of the publication, securing one of the top printing presses in Canada. This advancement allowed the newspaper to move to full-colour production for the first time, while carefully managing rising costs for both the business and its advertisers.

She was a proud member of the Ontario Community Newspaper Association and the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors, where she enjoyed learning from fellow editors and supporting the future of community newspapers. In July 2025, Linda was honoured as the recipient of the Brian Mazza Scholarship at the ISWNE Annual Conference in South Dakota—an opportunity she was extremely proud of and grateful for.

Born and raised in the Elmvale area, Linda was the daughter of Morley and Margaret Marchant. She spent her early adulthood building a successful IT career in Toronto while traveling and forming lifelong friendships. She later returned home to Elmvale, where she met her best friend and the love of her life, Brian Belcourt. Together, they shared 32 beautiful years of marriage filled with laughter, camping adventures, and unwavering love.

Linda was a devoted mother to her daughters, Kari Belcourt, born in 1996, and Marie Belcourt, born in 1997. She was their biggest supporter and fiercest advocate. She was also a cherished

grandmother to Evelyn and Harrison Belcourt, and eagerly awaited the arrival of her newest grandson. The love and laughter she shared with her grandchildren will never be forgotten.

An incredible wife, mother, grandmother, and community leader, Linda was a cornerstone of the Elmvale community. Beyond operating the Springwater News, she was actively involved with organizations such as the Elmvale Lioness Club and Girl Guides of Canada, always giving back where she could.

Linda will be deeply missed by her husband Brian, her daughters Kari and Marie (Brett), her grandchildren Evelyn, Harrison, and her soon-to-arrive grandson, her mother Margaret Marchant (née Dundas), her siblings Glenn (Giselle), Joyce, and Chris (Cindy), as well as her extended family, friends, and the many communities she served. She was predeceased by her father, Morley Marchant. As we move forward, we do so with gratitude for the overwhelming support, kind words, and understanding shown by our readers, advertisers, contributors, and the wider community. Linda believed deeply in the power of local journalism to connect people, strengthen small businesses, and tell the stories that matter most. It is our promise to honour her legacy by continuing the work she loved, with the same care, integrity, and community spirit that defined her life and her newspaper.

Thank you for standing with us during this time of loss. Your support means more than words can express.



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EDITOR:  
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# Homelessness, Mental Illness, and Crime are the provincial government's fault

## Open Letter to the Provincial Government

Over the past few months, we've heard of the ever-increasing attacks in the large urban centres (transit, streets, malls). We've also heard of Mayors and Councils having to declare "emergencies" to clear out "homeless encampments." There have been murders, drug dealing, all kinds of crime in and around every community. This may or may not point to mental illness, but most certainly that is where officials and media go, when reporting on the actions some governments are taking.

As for the mental illness side of things. Some continue to equate mental illness with drug abuse. There may or may not be a direct line between the two, other than doing cannabis, at an early age (before the age of 25+), can cause schizophrenia and/or other mental illnesses. One can be a drug user and yet not have any underlying mental illness, but a mental illness grips the person in a continuing pit of hell. Most have no concept of what is right or wrong; cannot make informed decisions; hear voices that tell them what to do and those voices never end and are never silent without that poor soul taking their medication on a prescribed basis.

Parents and family members, of those with mental illness, are completely handcuffed by the volumes of rules, legislation, regulation, bureaucratic "forms," (30+) and a revolving door of responsibility or no responsibility. This is because those volumes of legislation stop any, and all, efforts a family might take to keep their loved ones protected, as well as society, as a whole. Families can try to get guardianship but, and there is always a but, once they do, there is no place one can institutionalize someone, permanently, for their and their communities' safety. No one wants to institutionalize someone who may be able to function in society, but there are those who will not stay on their medications and continue to deteriorate without much needed help on a continuous basis. Yes, this does mean institutionalization for their own protection.

There are also those who scam this poor unsuspecting mentally ill people. They train the unwell on how to get out of an institution when the unwell are placed in a hospital for assessment. They don't care if that person will harm themselves or others and they will take money, goods, etc., (fraud) for their own gain, at the detriment of the person with mental illness. Some may even say they are "third party care-givers" so they can merely keep the mentally ill happy by not giving the unwell their meds. This is a vicious circle and it continues because government does not want to spend money in the proper places for those with mental illness.

Having had many come to me for help, all I can do, because I am not a lawyer, is to tell them they need to seek legal advice. It breaks my heart to see these families destroyed by one member who, themselves, are being destroyed with these various

illnesses. The road blocks government put in front of these families is beyond the pale. Here's merely a sample of some of the legislation that these poor people are dealing with.

- Health Care Consent Act, 1996
- Health Care Consent Act O REG 104/96 EVALUATORS
- Health Protection and Promotion Act O REG 136/18
- Health Protection and Promotion Act
- Mental Health Act
- Mental Health Act REGULATION 741
- Nursing Act, 1991
- Patient Restraints Minimization Act, 2001
- Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004
- Substitute Decisions Act, 1992
- Substitute Decisions Act, 1992 O REG 60/05, O REG 460/05 CAPACITY ASSESSMENT
- Substitute Decisions Act O REG 26 95 GENERAL
- Substitute Decisions Act O REG 99 96 REGISTER GUARDIAN DUTIES
- Substitute Decisions Act O REG 100 96 ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS GUARDIANS

It isn't just the families who are dealing with this mountain of legislation/regulation. It is also the entire health care system, so much so, that many in the medical profession and, even, the legal profession, want nothing to do with any form of mental illness process. These are the words of family members who are at the end of their rope, merely trying to protect their loved one from that loved own self.

There is nothing in these many pieces of legislation, right down to becoming a guardian, that allows anyone to be permanently placed, for their own good, in an institution. This was found in a document from the federal justice department. When reading the below, understand "forensic population" means "criminal activity committed by those with mental illness."

"Unfortunately, it often does. As a result of resource shortages, these customers who should have been accommodated by an adequately resourced civil mental health system have now become "forensic patients".

With downsizing and/or restructuring of the civil mental health care systems across Canada there was inevitably the promise that by reinvesting the money saved with the bed closures into less expensive out-patient community treatment the mental health care system would actually be better off. While superficially attractive, I don't know of any compelling support for this proposition. Some say that the ineffective shift to out-patient, community-based treatment may have something to do with the increases we are observing. Others say that, in any event, those saved dollars are never reinvested in alternative community-based care as advertised. I think that it is safe to say that many mentally ill individuals can be adequately supported through community treatment but that, at the same time, there are many who cannot be supported through community mental health care. Certainly, at the time of the transitioning it was an unproven alternative.

There is probably no single explanation for the fantastic growth of the forensic population. It is undoubtedly a product of a multiplicity of factors which includes the ones cited above."

Many families are dealing with this all year

round, but at this time of year it's even harder. The hospitals are over-whelmed; the municipalities are wondering why there are so many homeless when there shouldn't be; and the purported "community-based treatment may have something to do with the increases we are observing." The provincial governments, due to their, one can only suspect, greed, are turning these poor souls out, into the cold and are making it impossible for families to look after their loved ones. Not everyone can recover; not everyone will stay on their medications and with the increasing number of homeless, we are seeing, this is the result of government's harm to people, particularly those with mental illness.

I can only hope that the province will amend and/or rid the people, of Ontario, of this bureaucratic nightmare, so families can care for their loved ones and, if needed, have said loved ones placed in a safe institutional environment for their and our protection.

It's up to you for their and our safety.  
Elizabeth Marshall, Author, Director of Research - Ontario Landowners Association, Past Chair - Canadian Justice Review Board, Legal/Legislative/General Researcher - MPs, MPPs, Senators, Municipal Officials, Lawyers, etc.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The opinions expressed in articles contributed by interested parties and through the 'Letters to the Editor' or 'Open Letters' do not necessarily reflect the opinion of this newspaper and/or the editor.

Please submit your letters to the Editor or open letters. Email: [info@springwaternews.ca](mailto:info@springwaternews.ca) or drop off at office. Contact information is on the bottom of this page.

**Full name, phone number and address must be supplied.**



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**Participate** - hear about community events, recreation programs, and public meetings



**Be Prepared** - receive alerts about pending and existing emergencies

## Recreation and Special Events

### Winter Carnaval d'Hiver

Date: Saturday, February 7, 2026 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Location: Perkinsfield Park, 43 County Road 6 South



- Inflatable snow maze
- Warm refreshments and s'mores by the fire
- Free pancake lunch
- Try-it on snowshoeing
- Community public skate and skating performance

Learn more by visiting [www.tiny.ca/WinterCarnaval](http://www.tiny.ca/WinterCarnaval).

### Nature Connect: Outdoor Adventures for Seniors

- Snowshoeing Excursion - February 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Snowshoeing for Absolute Beginners - February 24 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- Winter Forest Therapy Excursion - March 5 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Register for free online at [www.tiny.ca/playportal](http://www.tiny.ca/playportal).



## Carbon monoxide (CO) Alarm Changes to the Ontario Fire Code

### What are the Changes?

As of January 1, 2026, all residential occupancies (homes, apartments, etc.) that have a fuel burning appliance, fireplace, or attached garage, must have:

- a carbon monoxide alarm adjacent to each sleeping area, and
- a carbon monoxide alarm on each storey (floor) without a sleeping area.

Learn more about these changes at [www.tiny.ca/fireprevention](http://www.tiny.ca/fireprevention).

Need help to understand the changes? Book a free in-home fire safety inspection with Tiny Fire by emailing [fireofficeadmin@tiny.ca](mailto:fireofficeadmin@tiny.ca) or calling 705-322-1161.

## Winter Maintenance Reminders



### Snow Removal

Do not dispose of or push snow from your driveway onto roadways, across roadways, or into ditches. This can create unsafe driving conditions for all drivers, damage snow removal equipment, and lead to a fine.

### Parking

No parking is allowed at any time that interferes with snow clearing. Snow in the forecast? Avoid street parking and potential tickets or your vehicle may be towed. If your car is on the road, plows cannot properly clear the snow.

### Garbage, Green Bin, and Recycling

Place bins back from the roadway (up to 8ft or 2.4m) and avoid placing bins on sidewalks to ensure sidewalk plows and road plows can clear the snow without risk of damage to your bins. Remember to take bins in from the road as soon as possible. Collection can not occur if the bins are placed on top of snowbanks.

### Hazards

Ensure children refrain from building tunnels or forts inside snowbanks by roadways. These are not a safe place for children to play.

### Driving

When approaching a plow, use caution, reduce your speed, and stay to the right. If you are following a plow, keep a safe distance (12-16 car lengths), remember that plows may need to backup for snow clearing activities. If you cannot see the mirrors on the side of the plow, they cannot see you and you are too close.

For more information about snow removal operations in Tiny, visit [www.tiny.ca/snow](http://www.tiny.ca/snow).

## Council Meeting Schedule

February 18  
2:00 PM

March 11  
2:00 PM

April 1  
2:00 PM

Township of Tiny

Council and Committee of the Whole Meetings begin at 2:00 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers and are open to the public. The Meeting of Council Schedule is subject to change. For complete details, visit the Community Calendar at [www.tiny.ca/events](http://www.tiny.ca/events).

## 2026 Municipal Elections

The next municipal elections in Ontario will be held on October 26, 2026.

Register today.

Registration is open! Make sure you are on the voting list and update your information by visiting [RegisterToVoteOn.ca](http://RegisterToVoteOn.ca).

To learn more, visit the source for any information about the Township of Tiny Municipal Elections at [www.tiny.ca/elections](http://www.tiny.ca/elections).

## Shoreline By-law – Site Alterations

Site alterations are prohibited, including the erection of any structure, fence, or sign through the duration of this by-law. This includes, but is not limited to, boathouses, retaining walls, patios, landscaping, decks, fences, walls, or shoreline alteration that are in proximity to the 178-metre contour elevation of the Georgian Bay Shoreline. Before you start your construction project, visit [www.tiny.ca/interimcontrol](http://www.tiny.ca/interimcontrol) for more information or contact us.

If you have witnessed a violation of the Interim Control By-law and wish to file a complaint, please contact the Municipal Law Enforcement Department at 705-526-4204.

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## Tiny Fire: Winter Safety Tips



### Clear the vents!

Avoid a potential build-up of deadly Carbon Monoxide (CO). Keep intake and exhaust vents for furnaces and heating appliances clear of ice, snow, and debris.



### Be prepared for emergencies

- 72-hour emergency kit
- vehicle emergency kit
- pet emergency kit

Download our checklists at [www.tiny.ca/prepare](http://www.tiny.ca/prepare).



### Adopt a Hydrant

Help Tiny Fire by keeping the area around fire hydrants clear from snow and ice. Every second counts in an emergency.



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# Chaos erupts as Springwater councillors disagree on legal invoices

By Wayne Doyle, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

If you missed Springwater Township's first council meeting of the new year on Wednesday night, you missed a beauty.

The season debut of what some locals have dubbed the 'The Jerry Springwater Show' had everything a premiere needs to draw a huge audience — drama, conflict, intrigue, suspense and some good old-fashioned name-calling.

For good measure, Springwater council actually made a decision to move the business of the township forward.

And that was just what spilled over from the closed-session meeting council had before the township's normal council meeting was scheduled to begin.

Alas, worn out from the previous debate, council opted to cancel the regularly scheduled meeting after spending an inordinate amount of time discussing the closed-session topic — invoices from legal firm Loopstra Nixon for most of November.

As council emerged from the closed-session portion of its meeting, Coun. Brad Thompson put a motion on the floor to make Loopstra Nixon's statement of account public, along with any future invoices from the firm.

"We've made everything available to the public in an effort to be open and transparent," Thompson said. "So I see this is no different. I think the public would be interested in this, as I think it's their money and they have a right to know and deserve to know."

In Thompson's view, the invoices should be posted to the City of Barrie proposed boundary adjustment page on the township's website, just like every other piece of correspondence that was directed to be placed on the webpage through a decision of council months prior.

The invoices in question are for work done after Springwater Mayor Jennifer Coughlin fired the legal firm using strong mayor powers on Nov. 8.

In a Dec. 11 letter to Rob Flack, minister of municipal affairs and housing, Coughlin sought his advice on how to deal with the following invoices:

Nov. 8 — Resolution strategy

Nov. 9 — Drafting and preparing resolution of council

Nov. 9 — Telephone conversation with "township people" to review press reports

Nov. 9 — Revisions to resolution and drafting

resolution

Nov. 10 — Telephone conference with councillor to review resolution

Nov. 11 — Telephone conference with councillor

Nov. 18 — Telephone conference with a member of council

Nov. 19 — To review draft correspondence and update to council

Nov. 25 — Telephone conference with councillor.

"Upon review, I noted several entries that raise concern," Coughlin wrote in her letter to Flack. "Specifically, the account includes charges for what appears to be conversations between individual members of council and representatives of Loopstra Nixon.

"These entries appear inconsistent with our engagement protocol and were not directed or approved by our chief administrative officer," she added.

Thompson's motion wasn't roundly supported.

Deputy Mayor George Cabral and Councillors Danielle Alexander, Anita Moore and Phil Fisher said they thought it was "premature," "irresponsible" and "inappropriate" to post the information.

"Typically, I would agree with you, Coun. Thompson," Fisher began. "You know, being transparent is certainly something I would champion.

"However, I feel that this matter hasn't been dealt with fully in closed session, so I could not support it now and I actually think it's inappropriate to be putting it forward at this point," he added.

Fisher said the township didn't have all of the facts of the billing, the detailed information, so he was not in favour.

Cabral, Moore and Alexander were of the same mind.

Coughlin and Garwood were supportive of Thompson's motion. They said the township released all other information related to Barrie's boundary expansion proposal as it arrived, and this should be no different.

"We were very consistent in doing that," she said. "We made it public as soon as it became available, so this could just be another opportunity for us, as it becomes available to us, to make it public."

The debate grew more intense before a comment from Garwood blew the top off.

"I've never seen so many people trying to run around and find a way to not release information,"

he said.

"Point of order," Alexander shouted. "Do not assume that the way some people are trying to fully understand the information and not make a decision that they can't back up is because I'm trying to hide something. That is inappropriate."

She then turned to Thompson, who was giggling, and chastised him.

"Stop laughing," she demanded. "Coun. Thompson, when we talk about decorum, that is not appropriate."

At that point, all hell broke loose.

Alexander stomped out of the council chambers. Cabral and Coughlin had a face-to-face.

Fisher walked out, but not before calling Thompson "a jerk."

Garwood, who was calling in from home, was left on virtual hold — trying to finish his comment while appearing on screen.

Moore just sat and watched.

Coughlin had obviously had enough and called for a break.

"I do apologize for not being able to hold the decorum in this chamber," she said, obviously embarrassed by what had just gone down. "I would think that this would be a group effort, but it clearly is not."

"We will return in 15 minutes," the mayor added.

When they came back, council voted on an amendment to Thompson's original motion that would see invoicing for all legal firms and consultants used during the Barrie boundary adjustment matter be released once they are paid, in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPA).

The amendment passed.

Thompson's motion was then presented.

"Council hereby direct that Loopstra Nixon LLP invoices to date be made publicly available along with any future invoicing and communication on the matter in accordance with the Freedom on Information Act," it stated. "That invoicing from all legal firms and consultants utilized during the City of Barrie boundary adjustment matter, including the decisions made regarding the City of Barrie boundary adjustment matter be released in accordance with MFIPA and that the release be provided once invoices in question are paid."

Council voted unanimously in favour of the motion.

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# 'Commanding presence': Former Springwater mayor mourned

By Wayne Doyle, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Former Springwater Township mayor Don Allen died in his sleep Jan. 17 at Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre in Barrie, one month shy of his 74th birthday, which he would have celebrated Feb. 14.

Allen was a chartered professional accountant and senior partner with Deloitte, as well as a trustee and a certified fraud examiner with more than 40 years of business experience.

He served as deputy mayor of Springwater from 2014 to 2018, and mayor from 2018 to 2022. He did not seek re-election.

Allen leaves behind his wife, Wanda, children, Kirsten, Leigh (Brad) and Graham (Gillian), and grandchildren, Robert, Kendra (Braeden), Rayleigh, Daniel, Jamie, Vivian, Finlay and Jack — to whom he was known as "Poppa."

"Mayor Allen had a heartfelt vision for Springwater that will live on for generations. He led with kindness and integrity and served with passion," Jennifer Coughlin, the township's current mayor, told BarrieToday on Tuesday.

"I learned much from Don and will always cherish our many chats, his guidance and our friendship."

Coughlin served as deputy mayor when Allen was mayor.

Springwater Coun. Anita Moore said she enjoyed working with Allen.

She remembered him as "a leader with a commanding presence" who had "a calm, measured and reassuring way."

"My term with Don was through the COVID era, and he navigated that meticulously as we moved into virtual council meetings while working so closely with staff from a distance to ensure it was business as usual," she told BarrieToday.

Moore said Allen's love for and pride in his family were always on display.

"I recall Don being especially proud of his daughter and her exceptional talent when she sang at our inauguration," she said. "I ran into Don several times at our community parks and libraries

with his grandchildren, where you could see him beaming with pride."

For Allen, politics was passion tempered with analytics.

When he was deputy mayor, he served alongside then-mayor Bill French, who considered him a kindred soul in some regards.

"We were focused on cost control at both Springwater and county," French told BarrieToday. "We attempted to better control the urban sprawl in Springwater that was approved under previous councils and both believed in transparency and open dialogue."

French said he and Allen stood shoulder to shoulder in opposition to the County of Simcoe's

proposed waste and organics facility on Horseshoe Valley Road, which was abandoned by the county a couple of years ago.

"Both of us approached governance from a business rather than a political position," French said.

Known for his work ethic and his passion, Allen devoted himself to creating his own private paradise, pouring hours into creating fantastic gardens and forest trails where he and Wanda would host and entertain.

There will be a remembrance and celebration of life on Saturday, Jan. 24 from 1 to 3 p.m. at Adams Funeral Home in Barrie, located at 445 St. Vincent St.



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# Valentines for Vets

Every year, Veterans Affairs Canada invites Canadians to thank our veterans by submitting handmade Valentine's Day cards. These cards

are then distributed to Veterans across Canada. The Valentines for Vets program reminds our veterans that they are not forgotten and provides Canadians an opportunity to thank them for their service and the sacrifices they made for our freedoms.

I encourage you to give valentines to Veterans or Canadian Armed Forces members you know or who live in your community. A personal touch makes this activity more meaningful. There are a couple of ways to get messages to our Veterans – by mail or online. If sent by mail, Veterans Affairs Canada will distribute the handmade cards to Veterans across Canada. Please mail your cards to:

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Veterans Affairs Canada  
Commemoration, Distribution Unit  
125 Maple Hills Avenue  
Charlottetown, PE C1C 0B6

If you would like to share Valentine's Day messages online, there are three different ways

to get your message out. Please visit this link at the Government of Canada website: <https://veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/get-involved/ways-remember/e-cards/valentines-vets-card>.

For teachers who would like to get their students involved in Valentines for Vets, a guide can be found at the following link: <https://veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/classroom/valentines-for-veterans/teachers-guide>.

Participation in this program is an opportunity to talk to children and youth about Canada's proud military history and the accomplishments and sacrifices of our Veterans.

I encourage you to participate in this worthwhile program. As always, if you or your family have concerns with any federal matters, please contact me at 705-728-2596 or [doug.shipley@parl.gc.ca](mailto:doug.shipley@parl.gc.ca).

Sincerely,  
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She looks forward to meeting our clients in the coming months.

# ELMVALE LEGION SPONSORS STRONG START FOR U9 MD HOCKEY TEAM



**By Susan Hamilton**

The Elmvale Legion-sponsored U9 MD hockey team is off to an outstanding start to the season, showcasing impressive development, teamwork, and sportsmanship both on and off the ice. Early season play has resulted in a 6-1-0 regular season record, along with a perfect 6-0 exhibition record, highlighting the team's strong work ethic and commitment to improvement.

One of the season's standout moments came during a hard-fought home game on Saturday, December 13, when the team faced familiar rivals from Collingwood. After two challenging matchups earlier in the season, the Elmvale squad rose to the occasion, earning a confident 6-3 victory in front of their home crowd. The game reflected the team's growth, resilience, and ability to work together under pressure.

This season also marks an exciting milestone, as it is the first year of full-ice play for U9 MD hockey under Hockey Canada's development project. The team has embraced the transition, demonstrating adaptability, skill progression, and

a strong understanding of the game.

Behind the bench, the team is led by Head Coach Matt McKeown, supported by Assistant Coaches Kevin Temolder and Brad Cantelon. The players also benefit from the dedication of Trainer Brett Klein Gebbinck, whose efforts ensure player safety and readiness. The team is further supported by Team Manager Lindsay Lynch, whose organization and commitment help keep the season running smoothly.

The team would like to extend a special thank-you to their sponsor, the Elmvale Legion, for their continued support of minor hockey and youth development within the community.

Looking ahead, the Elmvale Legion U9 MD team is gearing up for a major international tournament in Windsor this January, an exciting opportunity for the players to continue developing, compete at a high level, and represent their community with pride.

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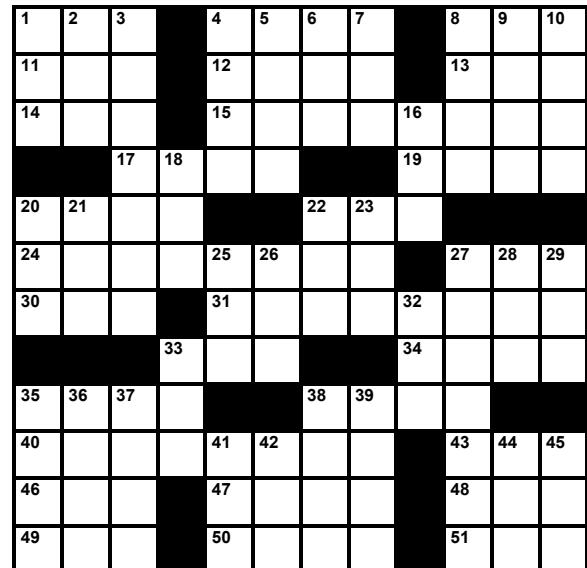
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Across

- 1 Make use of
- 2 "You \_\_\_ My Sunshine"
- 3 Individuals
- 4 Said \_\_\_ me...
- 5 Whitman, for one
- 6 Microphone tester's word
- 7 World wide web
- 8 Washer cycle
- 9 Smattering of info.
- 10 Easter rollers
- 11 Minable metal
- 12 "\_\_\_ but the brave ..."
- 13 Kind of iron
- 14 "Minute" or "hour" lead-in
- 15 Growing canines
- 17 X marks the \_\_\_
- 19 Colonial insects
- 20 Loafer, e.g.
- 22 Bookworm attribute
- 24 Aussie animal
- 27 Separation
- 30 Tag chasers
- 31 Dan Fogelberg "The \_\_\_ of Love"
- 33 Pilot
- 34 Vegas game
- 35 Alone
- 38 Banana skin
- 40 Didn't malfunction
- 43 1, 3 or 5, e.g.
- 46 Checkers, e.g.
- 47 Jim Croce creation
- 48 Easy as \_\_\_
- 49 Eliminate
- 50 Cheat, slangily
- 51 Work with needle and thread

Down

- 1 Better
- 2 "You \_\_\_ My Sunshine"
- 3 Individuals
- 4 Said \_\_\_ me...
- 5 Whitman, for one
- 6 Microphone tester's word
- 7 World wide web
- 8 Washer cycle
- 9 Smattering of info.
- 10 Easter rollers
- 11 Minable metal
- 12 "\_\_\_ but the brave ..."
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# Elmvale U7 Grey Team Offers Heartfelt Thanks to Sponsor Tim Hortons



By Susan Hamilton, Dec 28, 2025

The Elmvale Minor Hockey Association's U7 Grey team is skating through a fun and exciting season, thanks in large part to the support of their generous sponsor, Tim Hortons.

The young players, part of EMHA's thriving U7 program, have been developing their skills each week with enthusiasm, teamwork, and plenty of smiles. The striking jerseys players wear with pride are made possible through Tim Hortons' ongoing commitment to youth sports in the Elmvale community.

This season, the U7 Grey team has enjoyed friendly matchups against neighbouring centres, including Coldwater and Oro-Medonte. These games have provided valuable experience while allowing the players to build confidence and

sportsmanship as they take on local competition.

While we have many skilled players with previous experience, several athletes on the Grey team are brand new to hockey, stepping onto the ice for the very first time this year. Thanks to the dedication and steady guidance of parent volunteer coaches Brandon, Mike, Ryan, and Jody, these young skaters are learning, growing, and improving every week. Their coaches' encouragement has created a positive environment where every child can thrive, regardless of experience.

The players continue to build their skating, passing, and teamwork skills, while also making friendships and memories that will reach far beyond the season. Families and coaches alike are grateful for the opportunities made possible through sponsorship.

As the season continues, the U7 Grey team invites the community to cheer them on. Grab a warm Tim Hortons drink, bundle up, and enjoy the excitement inside the chilly Elmvale arena as these young athletes give their all on the ice.

The U7 Grey team and the entire EMHA community extend a heartfelt thank-you to Tim Hortons for supporting grassroots hockey in Elmvale and helping keep the spirit of the game strong.

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Submitted by Author Jason Weening

Hey Dads! Was Christmas everything you hoped it would be? There was much skating, board games, and consumption of foodstuffs in our home. There may have even been a nap or two along the way! I hope you had a restful time. Now, on to the new year! But first a short visit to the old year. If you read my last story, you'll recall that I recently got the van started with a boost, parked it in a snowy ditch, and was rescued by a good man with a good 4-wheel-drive truck. The saga continued to unfold...

I was driving away from the snowy ditch (which had some nice tire tracks in it now) to bring my eldest daughter to work. As we left, I asked her, "Do you have my phone?"

She did not have my phone. We did a quick look around the vehicle for my phone. Under seats. In glove compartment. Way up on the dashboard where you can hardly reach. I checked all my pockets. She checked all her pockets. And her purse pockets (there seemed to be a lot of those). She called my phone with her phone. No rings, rumblings, or revealings of phone location.

I searched through the vast caverns of my memory to the last time I had my phone. It was when I called the Auto Club to tow me out of the snowy ditch...the ditch...THE DITCH! Uh, oh. Could it be? I turned to my daughter, "Maybe it fell out of my pocket in the ditch. I'll go back and take a look. Can I borrow your phone to call my phone again when I'm close?" Being the good daughter that she is, she agreed.

I returned to the scene of the slip. I had crawled under the van to hook up the tow strap. Maybe my phone fell out of my pocket. I dug around in the snow but found nothing. Maybe it had fallen on the road in the general vicinity of the ditch. I started walking all around the area with my eyes glued to the ground. Then I saw something! Something small! Something square! Something...that had clearly been run over. It was my phone.

I was happy. I was sad. It had fallen out of my pocket directly into the path of the truck that pulled us out of the ditch. The truck ran over it. Was there a chance it was okay in the protective phone case? So close! A giant crack split the screen down the middle, just enough that I couldn't enter my code or use the phone. One half looked normal and one half looked like the static colour bars of death we used to see on TV channels that were not broadcasting anything. The day could only get better from there.

The first repair shop I went to could not repair it. The second repair shop...had my screen in stock! And a couple hours later it was good as new! Some days are like that, aren't they? But all those problems could have been worse and I'm grateful everything worked out like it did. I even chuckled as I wrote about it. Keep your chin up, dad! Enjoy the adventures with your kids, old or young. Maybe take one or two out on a date tonight or this weekend. Time flies. Make every moment count! Even the broken phone ones!

Jason Weening needs a phone to call his 10 kids and one patient wife. Check out his new book of funny family stories, "Yes, Dear...I'm Watching Them" on Amazon.

# Kings Remain in 4th Place After Winning Two of Three Games



Submitted by Jamie Robillard

The Penetang Kings played three games between January 2nd and 10th winning two and dropping one contest to remain firmly in fourth place in the Provincial Junior Hockey League Carruthers Division.

The Kings opened the New Year on Friday January 2nd at home and put in a solid all-around effort to beat the Innisfil Spartans by a score of 6-1. Penetang scored three goals in both the first and second periods to cruise to the win with Landon Simec making 26 saves in goal. Penetang managed 43 shots on Spartans netminders Ethan Lawrence and Luke Rockburne. Scoring single goals for the Kings were Caiden Pattenden, Carter Wilson, Ty Hutton, Wyndam Brownlee, Camron Hutchinson and Spencer Walker. Cole Rumbolt had two assists while 10 Kings had one assist each. Hutton was selected as the Kings Canadoor Garage Door Kings player of game.

On Sunday January 4th the Kings travelled up the highway to face off against the Huntsville Otters and came away with a tidy 4-1 victory. Lucas Dubois, Rumbolt, Brownlee and Walker each chipped in with a single goal. Adien Pethick, Pattenden, Logan Tucker, and Camron Hutchinson added assists.

Owen Moreau turned aside 34 of the 35 shots fired his was in the Kings goal. While the Kings had 24 shots on Huntsville netminder Darian Willis. Trevor Hutchinson was named the Kings Canadoor Garage Door player of the game.

On Saturday January 10th the Kings were at home to face off cross-town rivals, the Midland Flyers, and fell to the Flyers by a 6-3 score. Before a large crowd of 484 spectators as part of the Magna's Employee Appreciation Night, Midland goaltender Kevin Pearson played a strong game making 38 saves in preserving the win for the Flyers. Simec made 31 stops in the Penetang goal.

Scoring for Midland were Sam Thurston with two markers while Garrett Fay, Josh Underwood, Ben Armatage and Seth Goble each scored one goal each. Penetang goal scorers were Blake Weicker, Wilson and Hutton with single tallies. The Kings Canadoor Garage Door player of the game was Camron Hutchinson who collected a pair of assists.

Notes: Penetang has a busy weekend ahead with three games in three days beginning at home on Friday January 16th vs the Orillia Terriers at 8:00 pm followed on Saturday January 17th with a game in Innisfil against the Spartans at 7:30 pm and concluding in Midland on Sunday January 18th in Midland at 2:30 pm when they meet the Flyers. On Friday January 23rd the Kings travel to Alliston to clash with the Hornets and then on

Saturday January 24th they are at home for an 8:00 pm start against Innisfil.

Alliston continues to lead the division with 48 points in 33 games followed by Stayner with 45 points in 31 outings. Orillia is third with 43 points out of 30 games and Penetang now sits in fourth spot with 40 points out of 30 games. Midland is in 5th place with 25 points in 29 games; Muskoka sits in 6th with 20 points while Huntsville and Innisfil with 17 points each round out the standings.

The Kings leading scorers are Camron Hutchinson with 42 points on the strength of 17 goals and 25 assists followed by Wyndam Brownlee with 15 goals and 22 helpers for 37 points and Cole Rumbolt with 31 points.

The Kings have added both Ty Hutton, from Minor Hockey and Gavin Pich from the Orillia Terrier via a trade to their line-up.



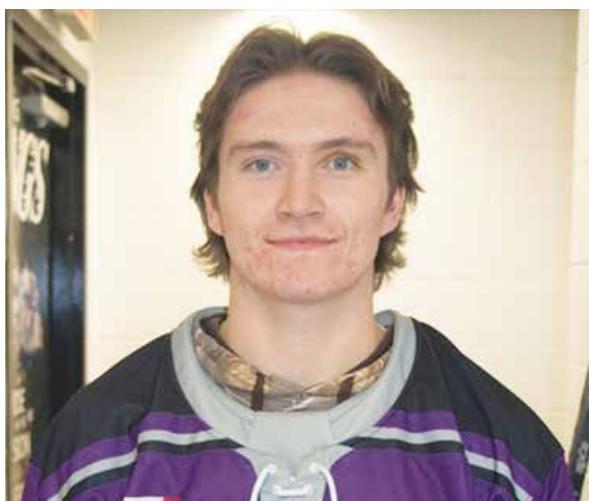
Ty Hutton - player of the game Jan. 2 vs Innisfil



Camron Hutchinson - player of the game Jan. 10 vs Midland



Owen Clennett making a pass vs Midland Jan. 10 with Flyers netminder Kevin Pearson and defender Lucas McLean.



Trevor Hutchinson - player of the game Jan. 4 vs Huntsville



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## Penetang Kings 2025-26 Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Visiting</u>	<u>Home</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Time</u>
Fri, Feb 6	Penetang-Midland-		North Simcoe SRC	7:30 pm
Fri, Feb 13	Midland-Penetang-		Penetang Memorial CC	8:00 pm
Sat, Feb 14	Huntsville-Penetang-		Penetang Memorial CC	8:00 pm
Mon, Feb 16	Penetang-Orillia-		West Orillia Sports Complex	2:00 pm



Submitted by Adrianna McGinis, Jan 24, 2026

January was packed with energy, emotion, and statement wins for the Elmvale Harvesters, as the team powered through a busy stretch of the schedule and set the tone for what promises to be an electric playoff run.

The Harvesters wasted no time ringing in the new year, opening January on Saturday, January 3, with a dominant 6-1 victory over the Lucknow Lancers at home in Elmvale. The night doubled as a takeover game for platinum sponsor Chantler Transport, adding extra buzz to an already loud barn. Fans were treated to a strong anthem performance by Matt Saddler, setting the stage for an exciting start to 2026. The Will Marshall Insurance Broker Three Stars were Riley Pitt (1st), Ryan Young (2nd), and Andrew Best (3rd).

Elmvale hit the road on Saturday, January 10, closing out their regular-season away schedule with grit and determination. Battling through a blustery bus ride and a late-night return home, the Harvesters delivered a confident 4-1 road

win, proving their resilience and depth. The Will Marshall Insurance Broker Three Stars went to Noah Featherstonhaugh-Gowe (1st), Ryan Young (2nd), and Dave Pearce (3rd).

The team returned to home ice on Sunday, January 11, for a packed afternoon matchup against the Minto 81's. The atmosphere was electric as the HCES Choir delivered a show-stopping rendition of the national anthem. Despite strong effort, the Harvesters fell 5-2, with all three Will Marshall Insurance Broker stars awarded to Minto players.

Elmvale responded in a big way on Saturday, January 17, when the Georgian Bay Apple Kings rolled into town. With the stands painted red and the crowd roaring, the Harvesters rose to the occasion, skating to a convincing 5-2 victory. The Will Marshall Insurance Broker Three Stars were Owen King (1st), Jacob Kelly (2nd), and Riley Pitt (3rd).

January also saw the Harvesters strengthen their roster ahead of the playoff push, welcoming goaltender Adam Redgate from Midhurst. The team was also excited to add three affiliate players from the Midland Flyers, hometown talents Garrett Fay, Caleb Dorion, and Cam Robertson further boosting depth and local pride.

The Harvesters organization also paused this month to extend its heartfelt condolences to the Belcourt family following the passing of Linda Belcourt, owner and editor of the North Simcoe Springwater News. Linda was a passionate supporter and a familiar face at Harvesters games. As our official newspaper,

# Harvesters Charge through to the Playoffs

the North Simcoe Springwater News played a vital role in sharing the Harvesters story, and the organization will continue to stand with the Belcourt family, valued supporters and sponsors of the team.

The regular season comes to a close on Saturday, January 31, with an 8:00 p.m. puck drop in Elmvale, and the countdown to playoff hockey is officially on. The season may have flown by, but the biggest games are still ahead. Fans are strongly encouraged to secure playoff tickets early, as sell-out crowds are expected. Following the conclusion of the regular season, and once our playoffs schedule is determined; season ticket holders and sponsors should watch their email inboxes for early access codes and ticket details. Stay locked in by following the Elmvale Harvesters on social media and visiting the team website for all playoff updates.

## Elmvale Harvesters Schedule

Date	Visiting	Time
<u>Jan 31</u>	Elmvale Community Arena	8:00pm

**Playoff games  
to be announced shortly**



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# Midland sees drop in speeding before province halts camera program

**By: Derek Howard, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter, Source: MidlandToday.ca, Dec 15, 2025**

The word from several North Simcoe councillors is 'unfortunate' when it comes to the provincial decision to stop automated speed camera enforcement in community safety zones, including the William Street location in Midland.

A status report on a Midland council agenda in early December explained the impact that the speed camera in the school zone had beside Sacred Heart Catholic School.

Operational at the start of September, the two-and-a-half month program issued just over 4,300 penalty orders, with gross revenues estimated at \$500,000.

The number of speeders captured in September, noted at 6,759, had reduced to 4,108 by the end of October for a 39 per cent decrease. Other noted decreases included the highest recorded speed of 103 km/h in September down to 84 km/h in October for a 19 per cent reduction, and the average speed of vehicles in the capture zone reducing from 57.38 km/h to 54.81 km/h during that timeframe.

The initial loan of \$50,000 from Midland reserves had been paid by the program, and after total program costs were calculated, the town had anticipated approximately \$283,000 would be gained as net revenue collected directly from

speeders in the two-and-a-half month span.

As a replacement measure for the discontinued program, the Ford government announced a \$210 million Road Safety Initiatives Fund would help municipalities with traffic calming measures, including an immediate funding of \$42 million for municipalities, such as Midland, who had installed speed cameras in school and community safety zones.

Midland Coun. Jamie-Lee Ball expressed disappointment during the early December council meeting, noting the 39 per cent reduction in speed over the duration of the program.

"It's too bad the way it is," said Ball. "I saw that the new giant signs that are coming out of our tax dollars hopefully will make a difference, but that was a shocking statistic."

"Hopefully people will appreciate that it is a school zone, and continue to go slow," added Ball.

In Tay Township, a staff report on the automated speed enforcement program was included in the recent committee of the whole meeting agenda, informing council that no financial implications would befall the township as the program had ended before its partnership for one camera could truly begin.

Tay Mayor Ted Walker shared his anecdotal experience on travelling the Midland route, and the perception the speed cameras had

since September. "It's unfortunate that this was cancelled because I really do think it had the effect of slowing traffic down," said Walker. "If you look at the one I travel all the time, William Street in Midland, it definitely, definitely, slowed people down. And now that it's off, the speeds are starting to crawl back up there."

Deputy Mayor Barry Norris agreed. "I just find it strange that (Premier Doug Ford) and (Transportation Minister Prabmeet Sarkaria) are making mention that they will be supplying additional signs."

"Let's face it – people don't even read the signs as they are now, so I'm not too sure where he's coming from. Hopefully the province does step in; something has to be done. The driving of people on the roads is pretty lackadaisical; they don't understand the rules. Hopefully something will come down the line," Norris added.

The Tay automated speed enforcement update report can be found in the agenda page on the Tay Township website.

Tay council meets for committee of the whole meetings every second Wednesday of the month, and regular council meetings every fourth Wednesday of the month. Archives and livestreams of council meetings are available through the Tay Township YouTube channel.

## Penetanguishene ratepayers can expect 3.57% tax hike next year

**By: Derek Howard, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter, Source: MidlandToday.ca, Dec 16, 2025**

The 2026 budget for Penetanguishene was finalized and adopted at the recent regular meeting of council, and residents can look forward to a 3.22% blended tax rate increase next year from a 3.57% municipal tax rate increase overall.

The blended rate is a calculated combined amount which includes the municipal tax rate increase, the tax rate increase from Simcoe County, and a provincial education portion. For 2026, the education amount remained at a 0% tax rate increase, while the county was provided at a 3.5% tax rate increase.

During the meeting, Mayor Doug Rawson expressed his pride for council, town staff and the public to complete the budget process; the first Penetanguishene budget since being legislated Strong Mayor Powers by the province earlier in the year.

"We committed at the start of this journey of doing this together, as a council budget no different than every other year," said Rawson, who approved the budget and reduced any amendment period so that it could be finalized immediately. "We said it's going to be the same way we always do things, so I think we did a great job together."

Much of the budget's details had been discussed

in a prior budget meeting from November, including the calculation that the 3.22% blended rate would equate on ratepayers' overall tax bills to \$52.64 per \$100,000 of typical residential assessment for municipal, county and educational property taxes.

An operating increase of 2.41% (\$341,000) was approved as was a capital and infrastructure levy increase of 1.16% (\$164,000); however, the policing stabilization reserve was utilized to reduce any proposed increase to zero per cent for next year.

Director of finance/treasurer Carrie Robillard explained that OPP billing was reconciled in two-year advancements, and due to a pre-chosen 11% increase cap based on 2025 billing, a \$2.4 million calculation for policing saw a reduction of roughly \$240,000 for a 2026 invoice of \$2.18 million.

"There's no financial impact moving forward by getting the OPP billing statement... later than our budget process," said Robillard, having received the invoice between the two meetings. "They were transparent to show us exactly what our 2026 calculation would have been."

Finance and corporate services chair Coun. Suzanne Marchand stated: "I'm pleased that the budget has been adopted this evening – the 2026 operating budget of \$16.8 million, the 2026 capital budget of \$8.9 million, and the 2027 capital budget

of \$6.8 million, for a total of \$32.5 million."

Coun. George Vadeboncoeur stated his opinion that the tax rate increase was reasonable for 2026.

"When we went through the budget in detail, I think the capital program is really reflective of our strategic priorities that we've outlined, and it really addresses a lot of the core functions of the municipality. I would urge the public who may be interested to have a look at the budget... it's chock full of information."

Rawson commended Vadeboncoeur for his role in pushing for approval of a 1% annual infrastructure tax increase to be added to the budget earlier in the year.

"I think we can hold our heads high," said Rawson. "We increased some staffing, we increased a lot of pressures and I think we've accommodated, but I also think we were responsible for setting up the community for success."

The 2026 final budget report can be located on the agenda page of the Town of Penetanguishene website.

Meetings of Penetanguishene council are held on the second Wednesday of each month, and can be watched live on Rogers TV cable 53, or on the Rogers TV website.

Archives of council meetings are located on the Town of Penetanguishene YouTube channel.

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## Bearbells By Leslie Noonan

January 17, 2025

A warm breeze rustled the palm fronds overhead and turquoise waves lapped upon the golden sand. I adjusted my sunglasses, smeared on more sixty SPF sunscreen and prepared for a full day of lounging. The shadow of a pterodactyl roused me from my languor. The large grey shape turned out to be a pelican, riding the air currents before diving towards the reef in search of a fish or two. Here on the beach people rotated on their lounge chairs, intent on browning intimate white skin that perhaps would have been better to have remained under wraps. My full coverage bathing suit was most definitely not in style, even by women thirty years older than myself. I did finally concede to a bikini, with a full bottom thank you very much. My butt cheeks are going to stay as white as a Canadian winter, though the number of thongs on the beach had me questioning how many bright red baboon bottoms were going to be gingerly sitting down on a chair tonight. A quick glance at my husband had me guessing that he was not opposed to the view, as even behind his sunglasses his head would turn just slightly as a smile would creep across his face when the lady in front of us would bend over to adjust her blanket. Of course, I am sure he is oblivious to all those thongs and probably focused on that pelican instead, or so I say to myself with a sarcastic snort. Unfortunately, the males mostly sported giant keg bellies, and the oh so wrong banana hammocks. I'll just go back to watching the large rolling waves, instead of the waves of large rolls.

While in the Dominican, I had planned on a trek through one of several nature parks, yet I was just not able to get myself excited about exercising in the sweltering heat in a very humid jungle. This was partly due to yesterday's excursion to the local Scape Park. What we had anticipated as a small, easy to walk park turned into six hours of often strenuous activity. Our family began our hike through the local jungle along a trail used to educate tourists on the history of the Dominican Republic and its people. Underneath the thick vegetation, the air was still and heavy. Giant Cuban snails lumbered across the rocky path, while brown geckos skittered up tree trunks. Our flipflops were poor footwear for the sharp limestone littering the trail and there were frequent yelps as especially sharp stones impaled our tender feet. Eventually the sound of falling water reaches our tired ears, and the trail opens out to clear blue skies above a green cenote, tucked away in the dense bush. Here we enjoyed a cooling swim, with rock rising all above us to the lush forest above.

Our day continued with more walking, and a climb up the side of a mountain led by our local guide. The black maw of a cave appeared with a wooden staircase

leading down into the abyss. Down we went, the air turning cool here under the earth, with the flashlight illuminating giant stalagmites and stalactites. Tarantulas flinched from the unexpected light, and cave crickets chirped from the darkness. Our guide led us further underground, and I stifled a moment of panic at the thought of being under tons of rock, until up ahead sunlight pierced the darkness through a natural skylight. Past the light, the cave opened into a giant cathedral. Our guide shone his flashlight on the ceiling, causing sleeping bats to swoop though the darkness, silent on leathery wings. We slowly made our way back to the surface as sweat broke out on our skin from the sudden humidity.

We ended our day being chased by mating iguanas. These giant lizards lounged in trees and under brush, except for two randy males posturing and charging each other. We were enjoying watching these two until the excitement came a little too close, as the pair charged right at our legs. With a yelp I ducked behind my husband, worried that these vegetarians might mistake my lily-white legs for a large parsnip. After chasing his competition away, the largest male stood defiant on the trail with a bowlegged stance, blocking our exit. We gingerly scooted around this scaly fellow as his unblinking eyes watched us warily. After an exhausting day of swimming, zip lining and spelunking, it was time to return to the resort for some well-deserved leisure time.

I wandered down to the beach as the last of the sunlight faded behind the palm trees. White clouds drifted across the sky, tinted pink by the sunset. I had the beach by myself, and as I watched the waves break across the sand, I thought of our former editor Linda Belcourt who passed away suddenly. Linda loved to travel, and I can hear her throaty laugh next to me as I ponder how banana hammocks can contain all the goods. I laugh out loud, remembering the video Linda sent me while she was in Costa Rica, of a young male gibbon who spent his mornings howling and obscenely flaunting the family jewels right outside her room. Tomorrow I will take a copy of the last Springwater news she printed and take a picture outside of our resort, as Linda loved to see her paper travel far from Ontario. I raise a mojito to Linda's spirit as today would have been her birthday, and I swear I feel a clink on my glass and hear a raspy "cheers". This is not goodbye, just a stop on another great adventure for this remarkable woman. Cheers Linda.



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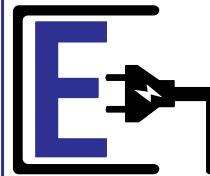
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# ANTEN MILLS

by Dennis Gannon

Will the snow machine come to an end soon? With the Great Lakes icing over due to the below average temperatures, the weather specialists are suggesting that we may see the end of snow squalls off of Georgian Bay soon. But when that happens we cannot truly predict. The early January thaw gave us a bit of a reprieve however we may be in for a record breaking season of snow and cold temperatures. Last Saturday morning the temperature here in Anten Mills was -26C apparently making Ontario the coldest region on the planet. It has been many years since we have seen snow banks as high as they currently are. A big shoutout is required for the Township of Springwater Roads team. They are doing their best to keep the roads passable and have put in long hours doing so. Their efforts are appreciated. We have passed the midway point of winter and warmer temperatures will be on the way.

In the last edition of the News for Anten Mills three requests were made. Two were for potential volunteers. One was for potential volunteer(s) to look after the community sign on Wilson Dr and the other was seeking input to bring back weekly euchre. There was a third request to see if anyone had an interest in a toddlers playgroup. Unfortunately no one expressed any interest in the idea and if nothing comes forward in the next month the items that are in storage will be donated.

The exciting news is that the other two requests were met with a positive response. Starting this weekend, the community sign will be back in operation. Karis and Kelly are teaming up to look after the sign which is great news for the community. Requests on how to access and have your messages put up are completed by emailing, [antenmillsign@gmail.com](mailto:antenmillsign@gmail.com) and details will be supplied. Please do remember that community event messages do take precedence over others and weather and safety are most important for the volunteers and may result in messages not being posted.

A long standing fun evening of cards is also going to be resumed. Thanks to Laurie and Judy, euchre will be offered at the community centre. It is hoped to begin again soon on Thursday evenings starting at 7PM running until 9PM. There will be a Tonne (\$2) charge for the evening with prizes being awarded.

Please bring your own drinks and snacks. When an exact start date has been decided it will be posted on the Anten Mills Community Bulletin Facebook page. Euchre will run until mid June.

The Knotty Knitters are in action every Tuesday afternoon from 1:30PM to 3:30 at the community centre. If you knit or crochet or don't know how to but would like to learn then this is for you. They are very welcoming and friendly and you will have fun with them.

Family Day is Monday, February 16. It has been many years since the community has held an event to celebrate our families. With the rink being in excellent condition this year it would be great to have an afternoon of family fun there. It could be a fun hockey tournament and some family skating, some hot chocolate and perhaps some music. All it takes is a few volunteers to make it happen. If you are interested send me a message on Messenger or email me at [antenmills1@gmail.com](mailto:antenmills1@gmail.com) and the Anten Mills Community Recreation Association will be happy to work with you.

Our neighbours in Minesing will be hosting their 54th annual Minifest the weekend of February 13th and 14th. It's always a great time and a way to support them. Check out the details on the Minesing Facebook page.

It is wonderful to see that the North Simcoe Springwater News is back in publication. Kari and Brian are honouring the legacy of Linda and it is important that we continue to support them. Recently there was an article in one of the three small independent newspapers in Renfrew County indicating that soon they could become a wasteland for local news. One of the papers is proposing that they end publication late in February after more than 100 years. Renfrew County is slightly larger geographically than Simcoe County and very much rural. Due to their geography they don't have the best internet service. It is by supporting the small local independent newspapers that we get our local news. Read and help support the North Simcoe Springwater News and if you support one of their advertisers let them know you found them in the paper.

That's it for this week, THANKS for READING, BE WELL and STAY SAFE!



**Journal Workshop Midhurst Branch In-Person**

Be your own Valentine this February! At this workshop BCHC will discuss what self-love is and teach you to create your very own self-love journal. Each participant will take home their journal and 20 writing prompts. All abilities are welcome!

**Friday February 13, 4:30pm-6:30pm at Midhurst Branch.**

Cost: Free Registration required.

**March Break Programs**

March Break is coming soon and we've got programs for kids and teens from design a mug,

make a button, a community wide scavenger hunt, make a pet bandana, solve a mystery board, and come see a sword demonstration by Dwarf Swords Barrie!

**Return to Regular Programming**

The second week of January, all our regular programming will return:

**Mondays: English Language Learners Club**  
1pm at Elmvale Branch (registration required).

**Tuesdays: Storytime 10:30am at Elmvale Branch** (no registration required).

**Tuesdays: Storytime 11am at Minesing Branch** (registration required).

**Wednesdays: Storytime 10:30am at Midhurst Branch** (no registration required).

**Wednesdays: Music by The Young and The Rest of Us** 1pm at Midhurst Branch (no registration required).

**Thursdays: Senior Tech Help** (bi-weekly) 3pm-5pm at Elmvale Branch (registration required).

**Thursdays: After School Games** 3:30pm at Minesing Branch (no registration required).

**Thursdays: Knit and Crochet** 6:30pm at Elmvale Branch (no registration required).



## Penetanguishene Library

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[www.penetanguishene.library.on.ca](http://www.penetanguishene.library.on.ca)

**Programs at the Penetanguishene Public Library**

**Special announcement:**

Extended hours as of January 2, 2026

We invite the community to enjoy the new library hours.

Mondays 10:00-7:00

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Thursdays 10:00-7:00

Fridays 10:00-7:00

Saturdays 10:00-3:00

for cancellations due to inclement weather. Nontransferable, non-refundable.

**Winter Terrarium** - Friday, Jan 30, 10:30-11:30

\$2.00 for members, \$3.00 for non-members. Non-transferable, non-refundable. Ages: 4-14. A minimum of 5 participants is required to run the program. Parents/guardians must stay in the building for the duration of the program. Please check the website/social media for cancellations due to inclement weather.

**Valentines Craft** - Tuesday, Feb 3, 3:30-4:30

\$2.00 for members, \$3.00 for non-members. Nontransferable, non-refundable. A minimum of 4 participants is required to run the program. Please check the website/social media for cancellations due to inclement weather.

**Drop in Knitting and Crochet Club** - Every Wednesday 10:30- 12:00. Participant led. Bring your projects, socialize and share. Please bring your own supplies.

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## Jo Knows Nutrition

by Joanne Nijhuis



# SALMON CHOWDER

## A COZY CLASSIC WITH WHOLESOME INGREDIENTS

A homemade pot of chowder gently simmering on the stove is a delight, especially when it's filled with tender

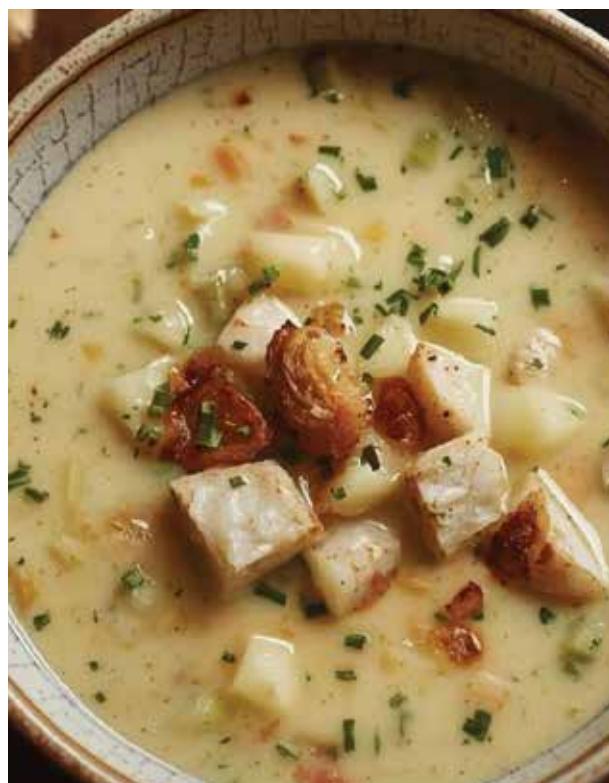
salmon and nourishing vegetables. The creamy broth feels rich and indulgent, yet it's made with wholesome ingredients. Replacing the cream with cow's or plant-based milk is an easy swap without sacrificing on flavour. Simple to make and great for leftovers, this recipe is ideal for busy weeknights and relaxing weekends alike. Just add a slice of crusty bread for dipping and you're set.

### Did You Know?

Salmon is a wonderful source of heart and brain protective omega-3 fatty acids and high-quality protein. Health Canada recommends that adults consume fish at least twice per week as part of a healthy diet. Potatoes have a bad reputation for their carb content, but this easy on the wallet vegetable is filling and actually quite nutritious and low in calories when added to soups. A good source of potassium, vitamin C and carbohydrates, potatoes are packed with fibre if their skins are left on.

### INGREDIENTS (4 Servings)

- 2 cans (170 g per can) drained salmon or 1 ½ cups (375 ml) fresh or frozen salmon fillet
- 1 medium white onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Tablespoon (15 ml) olive oil
- 3 medium potatoes, cubed
- 1 cup (250 ml) carrots, diced
- 1 celery stalk, diced
- 1 ½ cups (375 ml) frozen corn
- 2 cups (500 ml) water or broth
- 2 cups (500 ml) milk (cow's or plant-based)
- ¼ cup (63 ml) all-purpose flour
- 1 Tablespoon (15 ml) lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) dried parsley



- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) dried thyme
- ½ -1 teaspoon (2.5-5 ml) salt
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) black pepper
- 1 dried bay leaf

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large pot, sauté the garlic and onions in olive oil on medium heat until the onions become translucent. Add the potatoes, carrots, and celery and continue to sauté for 3 to 5 minutes to soften the vegetables and lightly brown the onions. Stir in the corn and water.
2. In a bowl, whisk the flour and milk together. Gradually pour the thickened milk into the pot with the vegetables.
3. Stir in the canned, fresh or frozen salmon.
4. Add the lemon juice, parsley, thyme, salt and pepper and the bay leaf.
5. Lower the heat and continue to cook the soup for 30-40 minutes, stirring occasionally until all of the vegetables are soft and the soup has thickened.

### ENJOY!

PER 1 ½ cups (375 ml) SERVING: |Calories: 385 kcal | Carbohydrates: 30 g | Protein: 27 g | Fat: 17 g | Fibre: 4.5 g | Sodium: 690 mg |

*Joanne Nijhuis MSc, RD is a consulting, media and culinary dietitian in Simcoe Grey Bruce on a mission to entertain and educate through her love of food. In addition to recipe development and writing for several publications, Joanne offers cooking demos/classes –for groups or individuals – in person and online. For more information, email Joanne at jo.knows.nutrition@outlook.com.*

## Annie's Journal

by Annie Warner Donnelly



Jan. 26, 2026

Hello Everyone. The Bible tells us that God never leaves us nor forsakes us so we know, without a doubt, that He was with Linda Belcourt on December 29th, 2025.

On Sunday, December 28th, there was a snowstorm where I live. Concerned that there might be a power outage, I decided to submit Annie's Journal a day ahead of the December 29th noon deadline. I sent the column to Linda by email at 7:25 pm on the 28th. At 8:20 pm, she sent a return email. It said, "Thank you."

On December 29th, my area still had power, but that day, we lost a woman who truly made a difference in our communities and in our lives.

Let's take a moment to pray. Heavenly Father, You know us; You know what we need in our moments of grief. Please guide and comfort us.

Please help us make the world a better place; to take responsibility for ourselves as we care for others; to create space in our communities, our homes, and in our hearts for peace to dwell. I think Linda would like us to pray for that.

Please help us to love others as You love us; to be patient when situations are difficult; to find joy in our relationships; to be faithful to You and to one another. May kindness and gentleness punctuate our words and actions. May we offer and receive forgiveness and hold tight to goodness when we struggle with self-control. Help us pray for those we love, and those who do not yet treat us with love. Help us understand who we are in You, and who You are in us.

Please bless the Belcourt family as they preserve, and add to, the North Simcoe Springwater News. May we follow the example Linda has set before us by exhibiting integrity in our interactions, by doing what's right when no one is watching; by keeping the commitments we make and completing the tasks we undertake; by exercising our sense of humour and our sense of fair play.

We ask these things in the precious, holy and everlasting name of Jesus. Amen.

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February 12, 26

March 12,26



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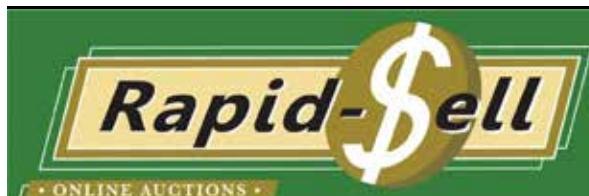
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West, Tiny  
Call 705 526 5074 or  
gssseniors2016@rogers.com

**MONDAY**  
**Elmvale Seniors Drop In**  
Elmvale Community Church  
10 am - 12 noon  
Call Lynn for info, 705.322.3309

**Midland Jam**  
Free Admission, Show 7:00, Doors  
6:30

**Bid Euchre**  
**Elmvale Community Hall 1 pm - 4 pm**  
Call Anne for details 705-322-1232

**Georgian Shores Seniors Club**  
Billiards/Pool, 9:00 - 11 am  
Seniors in Motion Fitness, 10:00 -  
11:00 am  
Hustle and Muscle, 11:30 - 12:30  
pm  
Bid Euchre, 1 - 3:30 pm

**Bay Shore Seniors Club**  
Bingo - Starts July 30th  
Adults Start at 7:30  
Bay Shore Seniors Club

**Askenonia Seniors Centre**  
Table Tennis, 9am-11am  
Yoga, 9am-10am  
Line Dancing Advanced, 9:15am-  
10:30  
Fun Fit Circuit, 9:15-10:15am  
Coffee Break, 10:00-12pm  
Chair Pilates, 10:30am-11:30am  
Intro to Line Dancing- Baby Steps,  
10:30am-11am  
Walking Club, 11am-12pm  
Line Dancing Basic, 11am-12pm  
Hand and Foot Card Game, 1pm-  
3pm  
Writers Workshop, 1pm-3pm

## TUESDAY

Table Shuffleboard  
**Tuesdays at 1 pm** Cost \$2  
Elmvale Legion  
7 John Street Elmvale

**Palace Tavern Elmvale BINGO**  
Every Tuesday night  
Midland Rotary proceeds 6:30 pm  
to 7:30 pm  
Barrie Rotary proceeds 8 pm to 9:30  
pm

# EVENTS

January 29, 2026 Edition 720

13 Queen St W, Elmvale

**Penetanguishene Legion**  
**Lunch and/or Regular Euchre**  
luncheons 11:30am arrival. It fills  
up. Lunch served 12 pm.  
**Euchre**

**Tuesdays, 1 pm - 4 pm**  
\$4, Drop-in, Legion #68, 2 Poyntz  
Street, Penetanguishene

**Georgian Shores Seniors Club**  
Billiards/Pool, 9:00 - 11 am  
Line Dancing, Prog. Beginners 9:30  
- 11:00 am  
Line Dancing, Easy Intermediate,  
11:30 - 1:00 pm

**Askenonia Seniors Centre**  
Pickleball, 9am-12pm (starting  
October 14)  
Cardio Drums Alive, 9am-10am  
Quilting, 9am-12pm  
Photography Club, 10am-12pm first  
Tuesday of every month  
Darts Club, 10am-12pm  
Zumba Toning, 10:30-11:30  
Badminton, 1pm-3pm  
Circle of Friends, 1:30pm-2:30pm

**Steelers Music Bingo**  
5:30-6:30 pm  
Steelers Restaurant, 23 Queen Street  
West, Elmvale

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Elmvale District Garden**  
**Enthusiasts**  
4th Wednesday from March to  
November  
7:00 pm Elmvale Legion, 7 John St.

**Bay Shore Seniors Club**  
**Pickleball** 12:45 pm  
Access Art - 1:00 - 4:00 pm

**Georgian Shores Seniors Club**  
Billiards/Pool, 9:00 - 11 am  
Chair/Floor Yoga, 9:30 - 10:30 am  
Zumba Gold, 11:30 - 12:30 pm  
Games Afternoon, 12:30 - 3:30 pm  
2nd Camera Club, 2:00 - 3:30 pm

**Askenonia Seniors Centre**  
Table Tennis, 9am-11am  
Pickleball, 9am-11:30am (starting  
October 15)  
Step Class, 9 am-10am  
Line Dancing Advanced, 9:15am-  
10:30am  
Chair Yoga, 9:15am-10:15am  
Men's Shed, 10am-12pm  
Cribbage, 10am-12pm  
Intro to Line Dancing- Baby Steps,  
10:30am-11am  
Line Dancing Basic, 11am-12pm  
Walking Club, 11am-12pm  
Creative Crafting, 1pm-3pm  
Bid Euchre, 1pm-3pm  
Woodcarving, 1pm-3pm

**Midland Ganaraska Hiking Trail**  
**Club**  
Meets Wednesdays to hike,  
snowshoe, go camping or enjoy  
nature outings led by qualified hike  
leaders. Hikes meet at Food Basics  
Midland at 1 p.m. For information  
contact Kris 705-435-8593.

**Ganaraka Hiking Club-Wasaga**  
**Beach**  
Weekly hikes Wednesday at 9:30  
am from various locations, year

round. Both levels of hikes offered,  
intermediate and easy. Snowshoeing  
in winter. Please contact Lorraine  
at 416-606-5081 or lorvanvlymen@  
gmail.com for information.

**Georgian Shores Aquarium Club**

**2nd Wed Sept-June**  
North Simcoe Sports and Recreation  
Centre in Multipurpose Room  
Monthly meetings

Guest speakers, DIY aquarium  
related projects

## THURSDAY

**Jam Night Elmvale Palace**  
Thursdays at 9 am-1am  
13 Queen St. W, Elmvale

Euchre - 7 pm  
Elmvale Legion

**Askenonia Seniors Centre**

Zumba, 9am-10am  
Pickleball, 9am-11:30am  
Corn Hole, 10am-11am  
Tai Chi, 10:15am-11am  
Chair Pilates, 10:30am-11:30am  
Writers Circle, 1pm-3pm  
Uke and Guitar Jam, 1pm-3pm  
Card Games, 1pm-3pm

**Probus Club of Simcoe North**

Meetings monthly 2nd Thurs. 10 a.m.  
For women & men in retirement or  
semi-retirement.

Penetang Legion, 2 Poyntz St.  
Mary Grise 705-526-6349  
marygrise0@gmail.com

**Coffee Party**

Last Thursday of the month 9:30 -  
11a.m.  
Elmvale Presbyterian Church  
All Welcome, Cost: \$3

**Georgian Shores Seniors Club**

Billiards/Pool, 9:00 - 11 am  
1st: Movie and Lunch, 12 noon -  
3:30 pm  
2nd & 4th: Tiny Stitchers, 9:00 -  
3:00 pm  
3rd: Book Club, 1:30-3:30 pm

**Let's Do Lunch \$5:**

**Elmvale Presbyterian Church**  
2nd Thursday of the month. Eat in:  
12-1pm. \$5  
For take-out & town delivery \$6 call  
322-1411 between 9 & noon on the  
Monday previous.  
Pick-up Thursday 11:15 - 11:45 at  
East side of the church.

**Connecting Together - Fellowship**  
**with Others**

Thursdays 2-3:30 pm call 705-526-  
6077  
St. Pauls United Church Atrium,  
308 King St Midland

**Wasaga Beach Parkinson's Support**  
**Group**

1st Thursday of each month 12:30-  
2:00 p.m.  
Dec. 4 Pot Luck at Wasaga Beach  
Community Presbyterian Church,  
208 Mosley St. Jan meeting on Jan. 8  
Wasaga Beach Public Library  
meeting room  
All persons living with Parkinson's  
Disease and their care partners are  
welcome. For more info. contact

Dwight (705) 795-6952 or Phil at  
Bender.philip@gmail.com

## FRIDAY

**Palace Tavern Elmvale BINGO**

**Karaoke 8:30 pm** Every Friday  
13 Queen St W, Elmvale

**Bay Shore Seniors' Club**

Woodcarving 10:00 - 3:00 pm

**Georgian Shores Seniors Club**

Billiards/Pool, 9:00 - 11 am  
Table Tennis, 9:30-11:30 am  
3rd Bingo & Lunch: 12 noon - 3:30  
pm  
TGIF social, 4:00 - 6:00 pm

**Askenonia Seniors Centre**

Knit'n Needles, 9am-12pm  
Cardio Drums Alive, 9am-10am  
Pickleball, 9am-11:30am  
Badminton, 9:30am-11:30am  
Tabata, 9am-10am  
Chair Zumba, 11:10am-12pm  
Card Making, 1pm-3pm  
Musicians Jam Circle, 1pm-3pm

## WEEKENDS

**Elmvale Legion**

Saturday at 5 pm  
Meat Darts- \$ 10.00 for 3 games  
3 prizes per game and a meat draw  
prize after \$1.00 a ticket (\$25.00  
value), 7 John Street Elmvale

**Midland Ganaraska Hiking Trail**  
**Club**

Meets **Sat and Sun**, snowshoe, go  
camping or enjoy nature outings led  
by qualified hike leaders. Check the  
hike schedule on [https://ganaraska-hiking-trail.org/?page\\_id=13455](https://ganaraska-hiking-trail.org/?page_id=13455).  
For information contact Kris 705-  
435-8593.

**Ganaraka Hiking Club-Wasaga**  
**Beach**

Weekly Sunday hikes at 1:30 pm in  
the Wasaga Beach Prov Park from  
Ansley Drive. Please contact Lorraine  
at 416-606-5081 or lorvanvlymen@  
gmail.com for information.

## MONDAY to FRIDAY

**VON SMART Exercise Program**

Low impact gentle fitness classes  
Adults 55+ FREE  
Call 705-355-2200 for class locations  
and times

**North Simcoe Bridge and Games**  
**Club**

Brooklea Golf and Country Club  
Mon. 12:45pm: Duplicate Bridge,  
Tues 6:45pm: Social Bridge,  
Wed., 12:45pm Duplicate Bridge,  
Thur. 12:45pm Duplicate Bridge,  
Fri. 12pm: Bid Euchre. Contact  
nortsimcoebridge@gmail.com.

**MIDLAND CULTURE CENTRE**

333 King St., Midland  
705-433-2321

**Canadian Improv Showcase**

**BORN RUFFLIANS**

Dec 31, 2025 from 9pm -12:00am

**FREE EVENTS PAGE**  
Please submit your event on  
this link:  
<https://www.springwaternews.ca/submit-event/>

## Special Events One Time

### Healthy Together Series: Immunizations for Older Adults

**Jan. 30, 2026 2 pm - 3 pm**

Penetanguishene Memorial Community Centre, 61 Maria St

Learn about recommended vaccines and how they can support healthy aging.

### Healthy Together Series: Quit Cafe

**Feb. 05, 2026 1 pm - 2 pm**

Penetanguishene Memorial Community Centre, 61 Maria St

Supportive, judgment-free help to reduce or quit tobacco. Free products.

### Healthy Together Series: Intro to Mindfulness

**Feb. 12, 2026 1 pm -2 pm**

Penetanguishene Memorial Community Centre, 61 Maria St

Explore how emotions can signal needs and learn to support your well-being..

### Healthy Together Series: Indigenous Teaching 101- Water

**Mar. 16, 2026 10am to 11 am**

Penetanguishene Memorial Community Centre, 61 Maria St

Explore water's role and in Indigenous cultures through cultural teaching.

### Barrie Winterfest

**Feb 7 & 8 10 am-4pm**

### Penetanguishene Winterfest

**Feb. 14-15**

Longest running winter carnival in Ontario.

Buttons sold before the event will cost \$3.00 and buttons sold at the event will cost \$5.00.

### Askennonia Winterfest

**Fri. Feb. 20 10am-3pm**

Bourgeois Community Centre, Community Hall 527 Len Self Blvd, Midland

Open house, free lunch and seniors got talent contest! \$35 2026 memberships for new members-one day only!

## Local improv group invites all to laugh and learn at Huronia Museum

*By: Derek Howard, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter, Source: MidlandToday.ca, Dec 19, 2025*

Should one travel near the Huronia Museum in Midland on the third Sunday of each month and hear laughter erupting from the walls within, that's just a newly established improvisation group bringing in some cheer.

"There are two reactions that most people have to improv comedy, said Bryan Piitz, co-organizer of the Improv Comedy Jam. "One group says 'wow that's amazing but I could never ever do that under any circumstance', and the other people say 'I've been waiting for this my whole life, this is all I want to do from now on'.

"I like to think we cater to both those kinds of people."

Comedy is a part of Piitz's life, having been involved with many comedy outings throughout his life in the area, including being part of Good Morning Apocalypse; a sketch comedy troupe which had won a 2018 Culture Midland award for emerging talent.

Piitz, who also works as a Huronia Museum employee, thought of the idea for the Midland group as its own entity from the Orillia improvisation group 'The Old Dance Hall Players' of which he is a participant; fellow Player Caitlin Robson also co-organizes the Midland group.

"A lot of people might have seen improv before, maybe on shows like 'Who's Line Is It Anyway?' for example," said Piitz. "It really is just unscripted comedy that is made up on the spot, but using a set of criteria and games so it's not just complete chaos."

When the pitch was made to Huronia Museum director Nahanni Born, it was approved for aligning with the facility's goals.

"It's a community museum," said Born, "and if we have space for people that can be creative and continue to tell the story of Huronia, even through comedy, then we're going to be that space."

Born said that while a museum could be a place to visit and learn, others may opt to use it as a source of

inspiration, much like the improvisation group.

"We've had numerous artists in here pull from our photographic collection to create their own works, and that's what a museum is for. We are a resource in many ways, not just a static display," Born said.

Since starting in October, participation levels have been good, said Piitz. Sitting around a semi-circle and facing some exhibits within the museum, Piitz stated that items within the curation had inspired suggestions to perform.

"We invite everyone to join us in a warm-up game called 'whiskey mixer,'" said Piitz. "It's essentially a tongue-twister game intended for people to fail, and it's in the failure that it becomes the most fun."

Piitz shared that his daughter had recently participated in an improvisation session where she faced fear until she was able to perform; he said she told him: "I was scared to join, but then I learned it's okay to fail."

That philosophical ability to accept comedy within the errors of humanity isn't the only lesson which conveys through the laughter of the sessions.

"The main tenet of improv is to always say yes and accept the suggestions you are given," said Piitz. "It makes for a funny scene, but in many ways it is also an effective philosophy on life: to accept the things that come your way, add to them in a positive way, and put them back in the world for others to improve on."

"And I think if we all made things just a little bit better every time, I mean how can that not be a net positive?"

According to Piitz, the cost of attendance for the Improv Comedy Jam is on a 'pay what you can' scale with a suggested donation of \$15. "However, you can put whatever you think you are comfortable with to attend; even if you're not able to contribute anything, you can still participate – we don't exclude people."

Information on the Improv Comedy Jam can be found on the Facebook page for the Huronia Museum.



**North Simco  
Springwater News**

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**LALONDE, Donald**  
October 4, 1942 to December 12, 2025  
Passed away peacefully on December 12, 2025, surrounded by his family, at GBCGH, at the age of 83 years. Beloved husband of

Peggy (Bush) Lalonde, married 53 years. Loving father to six children, Mark (Kathy), Darryl (Christine), Greg (Mitch), Kelley (Brian), Scott (Lindsay), and Vince. He was loving Papa to eleven grandchildren. Don will be sadly missed by his brother Victor (Sherrin) Lalonde, his many nieces and nephews and countless friends. Don was a long-time entrepreneur in the Midland area, o/o of Don's Towing for 40 plus years until retirement. Through the years he had many different passions and interests including antique cars, snowmobiles, CB radios and boating on beautiful Georgian Bay. A Celebration of Life will be held on January 10th at the Midland Legion. In lieu of flowers a donation to the Heart and Stroke Foundation would be appreciated by the Family. Memorial condolences may be shared at [www.leclaircremationcentre.com](http://www.leclaircremationcentre.com)



**BEAUCHAMP, Lucille (nee Laurin)**

Passed away peacefully on December 8, 2025 at Hospice Simcoe in Barrie at the age of 87. Before entering hospice Lucy was a resident of the Barrieville

retirement community. Lucy was the loving wife of Marc who passed away in 2021. She will be sadly missed by her sons Rick, Rob (Monica), Greg (Sherry) and Don (Jill). Memere will be lovingly remembered by her grandchildren Natasha, Caitlin (Louis), Emma, Benjamin (Amanda), Danielle (Tony), Fletcher (Rebecca) and her great grandchildren Sophie and Corbin. She will be missed by her step-brother Norm (Eleanor Dault) and her many nieces and nephews. Lucy is predeceased by her mother Zelie and father Majoric, step-mother Margaret Laurin, brother Gabriel, step-sister Dorothy (Joe Griffith), step-brother Fred (Helen Dault), her sister Pauline (Jerry) and sister Louise (Gabriel). Lucy will also be remembered by a close circle of friends and teaching colleagues. Visitation will be held on Thursday April 30th at 9:00 a.m. at the Adams Funeral Home, 445 St. Vincent Street, Barrie. Followed by a Funeral Mass, celebrated at St. John Vianney Catholic Church, 13 Baldwin Lane, Barrie at 11:30 a.m. A luncheon served by the CWL will follow in the church hall. Interment will take place at Ste. Croix Cemetery, Lafontaine on Saturday May 2nd. Donations to Covenant House or the Alzheimer Society in memory of Lucy would be greatly appreciated.

*"May God's peace cover you like a straight down rain"*

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Arbor Memorial Inc.


**BURDICK, Carolyn Diane (née Coughlin)**

January 10, 1947 – December 18, 2025

A beautiful soul has left this world. It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Carolyn

Diane Burdick (née Coughlin) on Thursday, December 18th, 2025, at the age of 78 years.

Mom was born on January 10, 1947, in Matheson ON. She was raised in the small community of Ramore with her brothers Ron, Brian and Terry. She spent 58 years with her husband, Brian, and together they built their home in Essa, where they raised 5 children and 2 of their 5 grandchildren.

She cherished country living and her commitment to family was unwavering. She was supportive, generous and kind beyond measure.

She was predeceased by her husband Brian Burdick (2024), her parents Lloyd and Ivy Coughlin and her brother Brian Coughlin. She will be lovingly remembered by her 5 children; Corey (Heather), Blair, Vicki, Justin and Joell, her 5 grandchildren; Evan, Vaughn (Cristina), Luke, Shyann, Aidan and great granddaughters; Abigail and Rose. Will be sadly missed by extended family members and many dear friends.

In keeping with Carolyn's wishes cremation will take place. Arrangements entrusted to the Steckley-Gooderham Funeral Home, 30 Worsley St., Barrie. Condolences and memories may be shared via [www.steckleygooderham.com](http://www.steckleygooderham.com)


**PILIPENKO, CAROL (nee WOOD)**

Passed away peacefully at the Georgian Bay General Hospital in Midland on January 6, 2026. Carol Pilipenko of Elmvale in her 71st year. Carol was born

in Aberdeen Scotland and immigrated to Canada as a baby and was always very passionate about her Scottish heritage. Beloved wife of Michael Wiwczaruk. Loving mother of Kristin and Stephen. Cherished grandmother of Cadence and Grady. Pre-deceased by her brother Ian. Carol loved animals, cooking and doing crafts, as well as spending time with her friends and family. She had a great career in the area as a Pet Groomer. Her 30+ years made her "top dog" in her trade. Carol was also a proud Legion member for over 35 years. A Celebration of Carol's life will be held at a later date. Memorial donations may be made to the Ontario SPCA. Expressions of sympathy may be sent to [www.lynnstonefuneralhome.com](http://www.lynnstonefuneralhome.com)


**MCELWAIN, Sandra Joyce**

Passed away peacefully surrounded by family at Hospice Simcoe in Barrie on Saturday, December 13, 2025. Sandy McElwain (nee Ritchie) of Phelpston in her 80th year. Beloved wife of Ray McElwain. Dear mother of Greg (Janice) McElwain, Russell (Heidi) McElwain, Kim (Jim) Rettinger, and Troy (Colleen) McElwain. Grandmother of Chris, Scott, Justin, Adam, Kyle, Will, Matt, Lauren, Katie, and Megan. Great-Grandmother of Declan, Keira, Liam, Camryn, Hayden, Emilia, Wren, Henry, and Emerson. Sandy will be greatly missed by the Ritchie and McElwain families.

In keeping with Sandy's wishes, cremation has taken place. She will be interned at a private family service to take place in the spring.

If desired, memorial donations may be made to Hospice Simcoe, Canadian Cancer Society, or the charity of your choice.

*Expressions of sympathy may be sent to [www.lynnstonefuneralhome.com](http://www.lynnstonefuneralhome.com)*

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**BRUNELLE.**  
**Gabriel "Gabe" Alcime**  
10-May-1940  
19-January-2026  
Peacefully passed away at Georgian Bay General Hospital on Monday, January

19, 2026 at the age of 85 years. Gabe is the loving father to Dave (Nicole), Michelle and Denis, beloved grandfather of Alec (Zeena). Cherished great grandfather of Weston.

He will be deeply missed by his brothers Guy (Patsy) and Victor (Verna), and his sisters Blanche (Maurice), Liz (Tony) and Jeanne (Joe). Gabe has been reunited with his parents Hubert and Lea, and his brothers John, Paul, Richard and Alcime, and sisters Marie and Louise. He will be sadly missed by his many nephews, nieces, and extended family members.

He raised his beloved children with their mother, Joan, though life led them down different paths. We enjoyed numerous camping and fishing trips, and church and family gatherings.

Gabe also shared a meaningful relationship with Gayle until her passing, whose unconditional love, support and companionship brought him comfort and laughter.

He grew up in Lafontaine, where his roots were firmly planted where his lifelong love for community began. Besides working in the automotive, delivery, and real estate professions, he had the privilege to serve as a council member for the Township of Tiny and the Town of Penetanguishene.

We wish to thank all the wonderful staff at Georgian Manor in Penetanguishene and Georgian Bay General Hospital for their kind and compassionate care of our father.

In keeping with Gabe's wishes, cremation will be taken place. He will be buried in Lafontaine with his parents. There will be a memorial service in the spring.

## OBITUARIES



**HORWOOD,**  
**William Bradley**  
**"Brad"** Passed away peacefully at the Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre in Barrie on January 10, 2026. Beloved husband of Jill Horwood (nee Glasgow). Dear father of Matthew (Valerie) and John (Andrea). Loving grandfather of Evelyn, Lauren, and Osmund. Cherished brother of Diana, brother-in-law of Peter Casey, Frank McCarthy, Chris Winn, Richard Shannon. Dear uncle of many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by sisters, Roslyn and Lorayne. A Montrealer at heart, he adored reading the Montreal Gazette, and was a huge fan of Les Canadiens. Brad had a zest for life and was a true family man, always seen wearing his Pomeranian shirt, putting around the home in Elmvale, socializing at the Country Diner, or cheering on his boys at badminton tournaments back in the day! With unwavering resilience, Brad showed that a stroke wouldn't slow him down. He sang in three choirs and honed his Bridge playing skills, setting out in any four-wheeled 'chariot' he could find to get from here to there and back. A heart of gold and unconditional love for his family defined who Brad was. A memorial service will be held in the spring (details to follow). Donations in Brad's memory may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation or the Diabetes Association.

**Expressions of sympathy may be sent to [www.lynnstonefuneralhome.com](http://www.lynnstonefuneralhome.com)**

## THANK YOU

By Kari Belcourt

To say the past few weeks have been difficult would be an understatement. The hole Linda Belcourt has left in our lives is unfillable. We would not be able to carry on her legacy — or her laughter — without the incredible love and support shown by this community.

We extend our deepest thanks to the countless individuals who attended Linda's visitation and funeral. Your presence meant more than words can express. Thank you to the Elmvale BIA, Springwater Sports Heritage, Barrie Today, and the Elmvale Harvesters for your kind words and thoughtful recognition. We are also deeply grateful to everyone who donated in Linda's honour, a cause close to her heart, and to those who sent flowers and cards during this time.

To everyone who shared condolences: thank you for the overwhelming kindness shown through messages, phone calls, cards, flowers, online tributes, and quiet words of comfort. Each expression of sympathy reminded us that Linda's impact reached far beyond what she ever imagined, and those gestures brought great comfort during an incredibly difficult time.

To our community: thank you for showing up in ways both seen and unseen. From quiet gestures of kindness to public expressions of support, your compassion has carried us through the most difficult days. Linda devoted her life to strengthening community connections, and the outpouring of care we have received is a true reflection of the community she so deeply loved and served.

A heartfelt thank you goes to our friends and family who stepped in to help host the baby shower for Marie Belcourt and Brett Scott in early January — an event Linda had been planning with such care. Your efforts ensured it was the beautiful day she envisioned, and we know she would have been so proud.

To our readers: thank you for your patience, kindness, and understanding during this difficult period. Your messages, words of encouragement, and continued support have meant more to us than you will ever know. This newspaper exists because of its readers, and your loyalty reminds us why Linda believed so deeply in the importance of local news and community connection.

We would also like to sincerely thank our advertisers for their patience and continued support while publication was paused for the last two editions. To our volunteer writers, thank you for your commitment and encouragement as we move forward. We are especially grateful to the dedicated staff of The North Simcoe Springwater News for taking us under their wing during this transition, and to our printer, Transcontinental Printing, for their guidance and support.

Linda Belcourt was a fierce believer in the importance of community news and strong local connections. Thank you to everyone who has helped us continue her legacy and her mission through The North Simcoe Springwater News. There are truly no words that can fully express the love and gratitude we have felt during this time.



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# Former political prisoner thanks Springwater

By Kate Harries, Dec 19, 2025

It was a feel-good moment at Wednesday's Springwater Council meeting as Honduran human rights activist Edwin Espinal appeared in order to thank the township's council and residents for their role in securing his freedom. And, very likely, saving his life.

The resolutions, petitions, billboards and meetings organized in Springwater Township calling on the Canadian government to intervene on his behalf gave him hope during dark times in prison, he recalled.

His mother-in-law Janet Spring had joined with local women in forming the Simcoe Honduras Rights Monitor to advocate for the release of political prisoners in Honduras. They travelled to Ottawa to meet federal politicians, including then foreign affairs minister Chrystia Freeland.

"In the hardest moment of my imprisonment, I was told about these brave acts carried out by regular people in a country seemingly far away," said Espinal, who addressed council with his wife Karen Spring by his side and members of her farm family among those in the audience.

"In May 2017 a democratic crisis occurred in my country following general elections. Thousands of Hondurans, including me, went to the streets to protest, to protect our vote," he said. "In 2018 after experiencing political persecution by the government I was charged and imprisoned in maximum security prison for 19 months."

The 2017 election, widely viewed as fraudulent, resulted in the continued rule by narco-dictator Juan Orlando Hernández (who in 2022 was extradited to the US on drug charges where he received a 45-year sentence until he was pardoned Dec. 1 2025 by President Donald Trump). Xiomara Castro de Zelaya was elected president in 2022.

Espinal was incarcerated at the notoriously brutal and remote La Tolva prison, with limited food, two hours of sunlight a month, no access to clean water or medical attention, and crowded into a cell with violent offenders who threatened his life. "It was hard to remain hopeful," he said.

But "this council and the residents of Springwater connected local issues to the global



**Springwater present and former council members shown with Edwin Espinal (in blue shirt) in centre with his wife, Karen Spring (to his right)**

ones and remained steadfast and consistent in their efforts to free me and my fellow political prisoners. These acts inspired me and gave me hope. They made a huge difference and helped tip the scale in my favour. The local Springwater advocacy helped pressure the Canadian government, then impacted the Honduran government."

In 2018, Espinal and Spring got married – in prison. In 2019, the pressure finally paid off and he was freed. In 2021, after a lengthy legal battle, all charges were dropped by a Honduran court and he was absolved – clearing the way for him to come to Canada.

Springwater Mayor Jennifer Coughlin commended the preceding council for taking the stance that led to Espinal's freedom. Two former

councillors who were part of the effort, former mayor Bill French and former Ward 5 councillor Jack Hanna were on hand at the council meeting.

They were members of the council that in April 2018 voted in support of a local advocacy group, the Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor, calling on Canada to stand for human rights and the rule of law, and urgently intervene in the case of Espinal and over 30 other political prisoners in Honduras.

Espinal is now a permanent resident of Canada. A celebration of his arrival here and the human rights victory he represents will be held at the Elmvale Community Hall on January 25 2026. All are invited – to another feel-good moment in the drama of one man's fight for democracy.

## Bernard 'Bunn' Deschamps

By Waxy Gregoire, July 2024

Bernard "Bunn" Deschamps was a young man growing up in Penetanguishene, where he played hockey and baseball in addition to other sports that were happening.

His hockey skills were good enough that he earned an invitation to play professional hockey in the Tropical Hockey League for the Miami Pirates during the 1938-39 season.

The league was made up of the Corel-Gables Seminoles, Miami Clippers, Miami Beach Pirates and the Havana Tropicals which entertained a 15 game schedule with all the games being played out of the Metropolitan Ice Palace in Miami.

Bunn enjoyed the temperature given that on his off days he would throw the baseball getting his arm ready for his return.

Unfortunately, Bunn attained an injury in which he lost a kidney while with Miami, but following his recovery he returned home to help the Midland Intermediate hockey team with the championship in 1940-41.

He also coached the Spencer Foundry Junior Rangers of the OHA into the semi-finals two years in a row. In 1947-48 he was a player-coach for the Midland/Penetang Intermediate 'A' team who went onto the OHA semi-finals.

After moving to Midland, he managed the Midland Indians ball team from 1958 through to 1969 delivering on numerous championships.

Bunn shared his love and knowledge of sports with others, especially with young people. He wanted to help kids get involved. He loved to talk about sports and to see kids participating. He figured if they were playing sports, they couldn't get into any trouble."

Bunn gave a lot of his time to coaching and teaching. Following his death 'Bunn's Kids' was formed to help fund young kids and to give them a chance to participate in sports within the community, the number of kids his fund assisted exceeded well over 700.



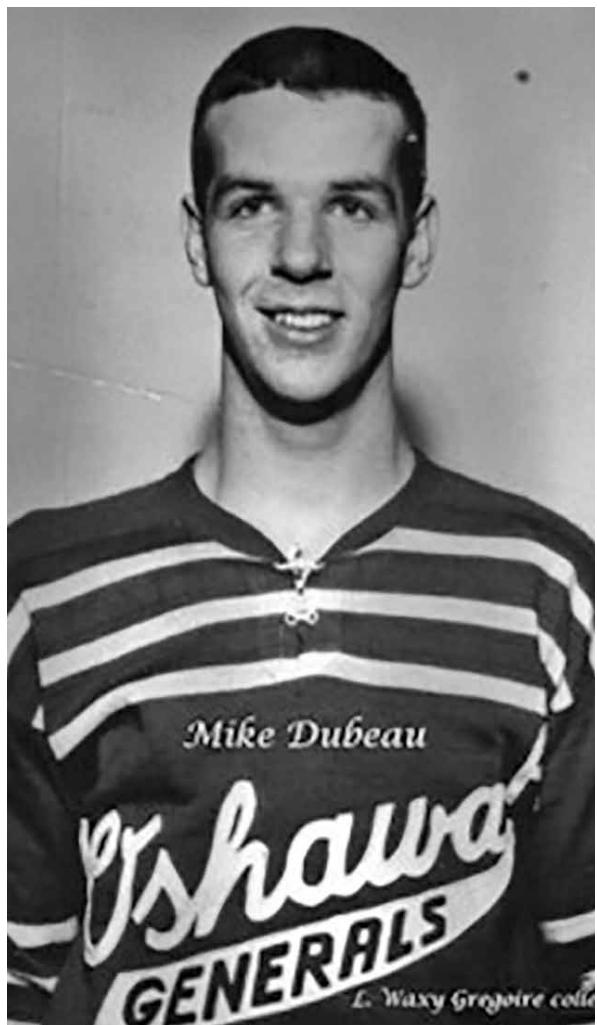
Bunn Deschamps



**They're Still In There Pitching**

THESE FOUR veteran ball players were teammates on the great Penetang teams of nearly two decades ago. They got together again recently in a game which raised nearly \$200 for the new Penetang Community Centre. Left to right are Phil Marchildon, who later rose to fame with Philadelphia Athletics, Ben Deschamps, manager of Midland Indians, "Pivot" Marchildon, Phil's brother, and Jim Baldi. —staff photo.

# Mike Dubeau... How I became an Oshawa General



By L. Waxy Gregoire, July 2024

When we were kids and you travelled to play in other towns most times the PeeWees, Bantams, Midgets and sometimes Juveniles who would

play one game after the other. If you were good enough, sometimes they would ask you to play in a higher division playing midget in one game, following up to Juvenile the next game while filling out the rosters. I was playing for 'LaSalle Grille' juveniles when approached by scouts.

Before the implementation of the amateur draft and remember there were only six teams in the NHL. The NHL clubs had created an elaborate farm team system whereby players were signed to one of three forms; the 'A' form which committed a player to a tryout; 'B' form which gave the team an option to sign a player in return for a bonus and the most common form the 'C' form which committed a player's professional rights.

The scouts would come to the house and talked to you of what they could do for you, schooling, housing, transportation, etc. But I always left that conversation with my dad, I just wanted to play hockey.

Many scouts came to the house Bob Davidson of the Maple Leafs, Scotty Bowman scouting for Montreal Canadiens and Don Graham for the Detroit Red Wings who followed me a lot.

Vic Grigg was a good friend of my father's and he was scouting for the Boston Bruins. Vic said to me one day, you better make up your mind where you want to go. I asked Vic, "What do you think I should do?"

Well if you're looking at a career, most probably the Boston Bruins, not because I scout for the Bruins, but the Bruins have been in the basement for the last 6 to 8 years. If you're going to look at a team where the opportunity exists, Boston would be the place to go.



**Pictured Bobby Orr (left) and Mike Dubeau (right)**

I sold my soul for \$1000 and signed the 'C' form...overall I became best friends with Bobby Orr, who is a pretty good hockey player.

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## OPP CONTINUE INVESTIGATION INTO SUSPICIOUS FIRE IN PENETANGUISHENE SUSPECT LOCATED AND ARRESTED - FACES ARSON CHARGES

(PENETANGUISHENE, ON) The Southern Georgian Bay Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) has arrested a suspect in relation to the ongoing investigation into a suspicious fire at a multi unit residential dwelling on Poyntz Street in Penetanguishene.

On the afternoon of January 23, 2026, a uniform member was conducting patrol duties in the Town of Midland when the suspect was located outside a County Road 93 shopping centre. He was arrested without incident.

As a result of the investigation, Andrew HAWKE, 43 years of Penetanguishene, has been charged under the Criminal Code with the following charges:

- Arson - Disregard for Human Life
- Arson - Damage to Property

HAWKE was held in custody pending a bail hearing before the Ontario Court of Justice, which is scheduled to take place on January 24, 2026.

Police would like to thank the public for their assistance and cooperation during this investigation, particularly as officers worked to locate an individual they were concerned for regarding their safety and well being.

## SNOWMOBILE AND PICKUP TRUCK COLLISION SENDS ONE TO TORONTO AREA HOSPITAL

(TINY TOWNSHIP, ON) A snowmobile operator sustained life altering injuries following a collision with a pickup truck in Tiny Township this morning.

At approximately 9:42 a.m. on January 24, 2026, members of the Southern Georgian Bay Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) were called to the intersection of Concession 12 in Tiny Township and an Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) trail for a reported collision involving a snowmobile and a pickup truck.

Officers located a 50 year old male from Tiny Township who had been operating the snowmobile and sustained serious injuries. Simcoe County Paramedic Services attended the scene and transported the individual to a local hospital before he was later transferred to a Toronto area hospital with life altering injuries.

The investigation is ongoing. The roadway and trail were closed for a period of time but have since reopened.

Investigators are asking anyone who may have witnessed the collision, or who has dash camera footage or other information that may assist, to contact the Southern Georgian Bay Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police at 1-888-310-1122.

## FIREARMS SEIZED FOLLOWING COMMUNITY STREET CRIME UNIT INVESTIGATION IN PENETANGUISHENE

(PENETANGUISHENE, ON) The Southern Georgian Bay OPP Community Street Crime Unit (CSCU) of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) have seized a gun and ammunition following an investigation into the illegal possession of a firearm in the Town of Penetanguishene that commenced in January 2026.

On the morning of January 22, 2026, an individual was arrested while exiting a shopping centre in the Town of Penetanguishene. Later the same day, at noon, uniform members assisted CSCU in executing a search warrant at a residence on Peel Street in Penetanguishene.

During the search, officers seized the following items (see photo):

- One sawed-off double-barreled shotgun
- Approximately 16 rounds of 12-gauge shotgun ammunition
- Approximately 120 rounds of .40 calibre ammunition
- Approximately 123 rounds of .22 calibre ammunition

As a result of the investigation, Nicholas HAMMOND, 35 years of Penetanguishene, has been charged with the following offences contrary to the Criminal Code:

- Knowledge of Unauthorized Possession of a Firearm
- Possession of a Prohibited Firearm with Ammunition
- Breach of Firearms Regulations - Careless Storage.

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