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The Highlander

Thursday **January 11 2024** | Issue 622

INSIDE: A LOOK BACK AT 2023 PAGES 10-11

FREE



Dysart et al mayor Murray Fearrey stands behind a \$1.725 million purchase of land on County Road 21, saying it's a good deal for the township. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

Dysart mayor defends land deal

HIGHLANDER INVESTIGATES

By Mike Baker

Dysart et al council has committed its taxpayers to paying off a \$1.45 million mortgage on a 91.5-acre parcel of land it purchased on County Road 21.

Mayor Murray Fearrey said the

township intends to pay off the mortgage – either via reserves or a loan – by March 1, 2024.

Fearrey said the decision was made following a closed council discussion Nov. 28. He said the mortgage, held by developer Paul Wilson through his company Harburn Holdings, has to be settled to ensure the township isn't in

breach of the Ontario Municipal Act. Treasurer, Barb Swannell, said the motion approved by council was to pay out \$1.45 million.

Fearrey said, "we have to pay that out because we can't take on private mortgages. The law says a municipality

Continued **'Council'** on page 5

Curling club wants new Hali rink

By Mike Baker

Haliburton Curling Club president, Wanda Ruddy, said she's been hearing rumours of a new curling rink being built in Haliburton for years, though noted chatter has increased tenfold since Dysart et al closed on a 91.5-acre property on the outskirts of Haliburton village last summer.

Mayor Murray Fearrey has repeatedly stated the land, which Dysart acquired for \$1.725 million, would be an ideal home for a new arena and curling rink. Ruddy said the membership would be interested in a new location.

"The one here in town is 82 years old. It's been renovated and refurbished over time, but it's an old building. So, of course we'd all be excited to have a new curling club... but I think we need to have a seat at the table to make sure it gets designed the right way," Ruddy said.

She isn't concerned about losing a prime spot in the centre of town, noting most members commute from outlying areas such as Percy and Haliburton lakes.

Ruddy said the idea of a new curling rink was first floated about five years ago – after local resident Marnie Blair donated a 15.75-acre parcel of land across from the Pinestone Resort on County Road 21 to Dysart. The gift was made public at a council meeting in November 2019, on condition the land be used for recreational purposes.

Then, there was nothing. While Ruddy said she had preliminary talks with both Blair and Andrea Roberts, Dysart's mayor at the time, in late 2019, things went quiet as soon as the pandemic hit.

The land transfer never went through, which was news to Roberts.

"It stalled for several reasons – but when I left council my understanding was [it was going to get done]. Then I found out Dysart bought [the 91.5-acre parcel] up the road, so I followed up and asked what happened to the gift from the Blair family and was told it was dead in the water," Roberts said.

Continued **'Dysart'** on page 2

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Haliburton Curling Club president Wanda Ruddy is supportive of a new curling rink. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

Dysart declines private land gift

Continued from page 1

She noted staff had spent considerable time on the file – going as far as to rough sketch what any development could look like.

“The land was a bit of a triangle – there was some wetland to the west, there was road access off Soyers Lake Road. We mapped it out using the township office, arena and curling club as a footprint – that area is five acres downtown. We thought we could fit an updated arena and curling rink on five acres, put in parking, and meet the required setbacks, so from that perspective the project seemed feasible,” Roberts added.

Fearrey said the deal collapsed because Blair wanted a tax receipt for the donation based on the land being valued at \$300,000.

“We didn’t accept that appraisal and weren’t willing to issue a tax receipt based on that valuation. The land there is a bog, filled with rocks. It would have taken so much money to be able to develop it,” Fearrey said.

The mayor also questioned whether it would be appropriate for the municipality to issue a tax receipt for the land, since it was presented to the previous council as a gift.

“A gift is just that – a gift. They must be given for free,” Fearrey said, referencing the Ontario Municipal Act.

Blair declined to comment when approached by *The Highlander*.

Looking to the future

Ruddy said she has no idea what a new curling rink would cost, but noted the Haliburton club would be able to transfer infrastructure from the current facility.

The club installed a new ice plant in 2016, at a cost of \$175,000, with Ruddy saying it still has 30 years of life left. A new double oven, dishwasher and cupboards for the kitchen – to be installed this April courtesy of a \$141,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant – could also be moved over.

In a new rink, Ruddy said she’d like separate spaces for a lounge and eating area, with a bar and kitchen grouped together. She feels four sheets of ice “is plenty for Haliburton.”

There’s still life left in the current facility – which she feels is important, as she believes it’ll be years before a new build comes to fruition.

“We are at the very early stages – is this going to be a five-year project? A 10-year project? We just don’t know at this point. We’re clearly an interested party and want to be part of this process. We need to be mindful this could be a possibility down the line and adjust our long-term planning appropriately,” Ruddy said.

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Market execs say Dysart ask 'unreasonable'

By Mike Baker

Haliburton County Farmers Market (HCFM) executives say they may be forced to cancel the Haliburton market this year after labelling terms outlined by Dysart et al council for the event's return to Head Lake Park "unreasonable and unrealistic."

Volunteer board members Mike Townsend and Brian Nash met with *The Highlander* this week to respond to a list of demands made by Dysart officials at a Dec. 12 council meeting, chiefly the introduction of a monthly fee to use the park on Tuesdays during the spring and summer.

It was suggested by mayor Murray Fearrey, and supported by the rest of council, that a \$1,000 monthly fee be applied to the market covering events in July, August and September, with a \$700 fee applied for any other month.

"Very simply, it's a no – we just don't have the money to be able to do that," Townsend said.

He shared a ledger showing the market's financials from the past year. The group recorded revenues of \$15,700 and expenses totalling \$14,182 – with a leftover cash balance of \$1,518.

Townsend said the market would have to increase its vendor fees by 32.5 per cent to accommodate the monthly fee – something the board isn't willing to do, Nash said.

"Most of our vendors are small vendors. Coming to the market, for them, is an opportunity to make a little bit of extra money. Maybe they do well enough that they start a small business, maybe it turns into something. But for most, this is a side hustle – they have [other] jobs," Nash said.

"The only people who could accommodate such a rate increase are the big vendors, which isn't what we, or this council want," he added.

HCFM currently charges vendors \$300 per season to appear at the Haliburton market.

Fearrey told *The Highlander* the idea of implementing a monthly fee was to cover the cost of any damages at the park after a market.

"A free ride is not going to happen in the park anymore. If you're causing extra expenses, you should pay for that," Fearrey said. "This is a high impact day on the washrooms. We've got to check them

regularly. With four washrooms open, it's extra supplies, extra cleaning – that's a cost that shouldn't be borne by other taxpayers. Then there's the damage that's done to the grass [when it's wet].

"This is a high-profile property. Where else are you going to find a location like that, with parking and washrooms, for \$1,000 a month? I don't think [paying that] will kill them," the mayor added.

Fearrey explained how he arrived at that \$1,000 number – with the market boasting between 40 and 50 vendors, the mayor believes each of those can afford to pay an extra \$20 per month. He also noted council will "assess" implementing fees on other events and programs that take place in the park on a case-by-case basis.

The Haliburton market was held at Head Lake Park for 11 years before being moved to nearby Rotary Beach Park last season. Nash said the relocation was not well received – by vendors, or the public. Attendance was down approximately 30 per cent from the prior year, an anomaly, Nash said, considering HCFM's other events in Minden and at Abbey Gardens saw significant growth.

"We want to have a market in Haliburton, but I don't think we would get very many vendors signing up to go back to Rotary Beach. Although we may want to run a market, my sense is we wouldn't have the vendors to do it," Nash said, confirming Head Lake Park is the only viable location from the board's perspective.

Townsend feels it would be inappropriate for the board to direct market volunteers to police parking at Head Lake Park and along Highland Street on market days – another Dysart council request.

Next steps

Townsend said applications for the coming season typically go out to would-be vendors Jan. 1, with a final decision over who's in made by the end of January. While applications have gone out, there hasn't been much uptick thus far.

"We're asking people to apply, but we don't know 100 per cent yet where we're going to be. Most people are hoping we're going back to Head Lake Park and will apply based on that," Townsend said.



Haliburton County Farmers Market officials Mike Townsend and Brian Nash say it's imperative the Haliburton market is moved back to Head Lake Park. Photo by Mike Baker.

The board is willing to adjust the market's hours to try and mitigate traffic issues on market days, which has been another stumbling block for Dysart, particularly coun. Pat Casey. The ward 1 councillor has repeatedly spoken of his concern with vehicles parking along Highland Street, creating what he believes is a dangerous logjam heading into and out of town.

Townsend said the board would also be willing to provide a damage deposit to the township. Nash said the board has no record of any damage claims from the township in the 11 years the market was held at Head Lake Park.

"For us, we feel the community has spoken. People want the market back at Head Lake

Park. It's a big attraction for Haliburton, it helps the downtown businesses. Head Lake Park is much more accessible than Rotary Beach – basically, people with mobility issues and moms with strollers stopped coming last year because they couldn't move around as freely," Townsend said. "This is about supporting local farmers, growers, producers and artisans."

Fearrey said he would be disappointed to lose the Haliburton market, noting council is open to meeting with HCFM executives to find a resolution that works for everyone.

"Nobody is trying to discourage things from happening in the park... but if you're holding an event where you're making money... then you'll have to pay something," Fearrey said.

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AROUND THE COUNTY NEWS

Dorset to get library branch

Algonquin Highlands and the Haliburton County Public Library have announced approval for the creation of a new library space in the Dorset Recreation Centre (DRC).

The previous library in the DRC closed in 2019.

HCPL marketing and communications coordinator, Tessa Iles, said they were responding to the needs of the community.

“The Haliburton County Public Library first proposed the re-establishment of a dedicated library space within the DRC in the fall of 2023. Following investigation and an on-site meeting between Algonquin Highlands staff and the chief administrative officer (CAO), a prime location was identified on the lower level in the northwest corner. On Dec. 14, council unanimously supported the proposed new library location,” she said.

Iles added the newly-designated library space will be “an open and inviting area, spanning an impressive 683 sq. ft. with abundant natural light pouring in through four large windows.” Directly across the hallway is a meeting room that the library will be able to use to host programs.

While the exact timeline for the library’s grand reopening hasn’t been confirmed, Iles said anticipation is building within the community.

“The library is eager to transform the space into a welcoming haven for readers and learners alike. Plans for furnishing the area are already in motion, promising a vibrant and dynamic environment for visitors.”

In the meantime, residents are encouraged to continue using library services through the Dorset depot library lockers outside Robinson’s General Store.



The Dorset Rec Centre, once reopened, will have a library again. *File.*

Skyline Dance Studio launches bursary

Skyline Dance Studio has announced a bursary program, which provides up to \$500 per student, to help support their program participation.

In a media release, the studio said the program is offered to both recreational and competitive dancers, aged two to 18, who might need a little bit of extra financial support to get there.

Board chair, Allison Cox, said, “at Skyline, our mission is to create a family atmosphere where dancers of all ages feel safe to be who they are and express themselves creatively.” She added, “we believe each student has the ability to increase their physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being through movement, and we wanted to be able to ensure more students could be supported to join us, which is why this bursary program is so pivotal.”

Through the support of the original founding sponsors, a portion of their contribution was earmarked for the bursary

program and as a result, Skyline was able to launch this supportive student bursary.

To learn more about the bursary opportunity and to apply, send an email to info@skylinedancestudio.ca

Wigamog site ‘secure’

Dysart et al bylaw officer, Hailey Cole, told council Dec. 12 she had addressed some safety concerns at the Wigamog Inn property.

“All ground floor windows and doors that have been broken are boarded up, any that aren’t boarded are locked. There are fences

up around the open pools,” Cole said. “I will be monitoring the site to make sure security is maintained until... we can proceed with demolition.”

As reported by *The Highlander* Dec. 7, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks is investigating the demolition, with work temporarily on hold.

Cole said she expects demolition to be complete sometime in the spring. (*Around the County news compiled by Lisa Gervais and Mike Baker*).

INFORMATION PAGE

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VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON COUNCIL MEETINGS
Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted with a hybrid model of in-person and electronic participation in accordance with the Municipality Act. Meetings begin at 9:00 AM unless otherwise noted. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

January 11 - Regular Council Meeting
January 18 - Special Meeting of Council and Public Meeting
January 25 - Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or a live-stream link available on the Township CivicWeb Portal at www.mindenhills.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingTypeList.aspx. Visit our website for more information.

Council wants ground broken within two years

Continued from page 1

can't borrow money from anything but a bank."

Clerk, Mallory Bishop, said provincial regulation 276/02 of the Act outlines rules around long-term borrowing, with municipalities only permitted to enter into agreements with a bank or other recognized financial institution.

The deal, completed in late July, saw the township pay \$1.725 million for the property, which was owned by Andrew Hodgson through his holding company Ontario Vantage Consulting (OVC). Hodgson had owned the land for roughly a year, buying it from Wilson for \$1.5 million in 2022.

The purchase agreement between Dysart and OVC stipulated Dysart would assume a \$1.45 million mortgage at five per cent interest. It is to run to 2028. Fearrey said the township has earmarked reserve funds to pay off the lump sum, but with interest rates expected to drop over the next couple of months, taking out a loan to cover it – and replenishing reserves – is an option.

Fearrey admitted settling the mortgage early also removes any possible conflict of interest, given Wilson's involvement in the proposed development of land overlooking Grass Lake. That project, which would repurpose 2.5 hectares of vacant land along Peninsula Road into four lots that would each house multi-storey apartment and condo buildings, has already been supported by Dysart and County councils, but been appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal. A three-week hearing is scheduled for November 2024.

How the deal came together

Wilson said he bought the 91.5-acre parcel for \$300,000 in 2018. He was interested in developing the land fronting County Road 21 for commercial use.

In 2019, Wilson said he was contacted by former County planner, Charley White, asking if he'd consider selling. By then, he said he'd invested approximately \$600,000 correcting drainage issues on a 3.75-acre plot fronting County Road 21, and building an access road, which stretched around 1.5 kilometres into the property.

He said he was told the former Dysart et al council was interested in the land. Wilson said he made a formal presentation to council, offering the land for \$1 million – provided he could retain the two lots fronting County Road 21. No deal was struck. Former Dysart mayor, Andrea Roberts, said her council never seriously considered buying the lot.

"We did not want to be developers," Roberts said. "Being a developer has considerable risk, and when you're in the municipal world you have to be risk averse. If you're going to make a bet, it has to be on a sure thing... our goal was more to set the stage as best we could for development."

When the potential deal fell apart, Wilson connected with Hodgson and agreed to sell to him.



Paul Wilson stands on the site of his Grass Lake land. He sold land across County Road 21 in 2022. *File.*

Late to the party

Immediately following the 2022 municipal election, Fearrey said he reached out to Wilson about the land, but was too late. Wilson said he pitched to Hodgson that Dysart was again interested in the property. By this time, Hodgson said he had invested around \$225,000 adding to the access road.

Fearrey said, "we were told the price was the price. I negotiated a bit, but Andrew wanted his money back plus whatever he'd invested into it... either you do the deal, or you don't. And we wanted to make a deal," Fearrey said.

Hodgson also retained the 3.75-acre plot fronting County Road 21, with the township agreeing to cover any survey costs associated with the site.

The mayor said the township didn't seek an appraisal of the property and opted to use Hodgson as their real estate representative in the deal. Fearrey said that saved the township in the region of \$90,000, with Hodgson not taking any commission.

Asked if the township had considered any other property – notably a 780-acre site on nearby Moon Road listed at just under \$2 million, Fearrey said they didn't shop around.

"We felt this was a one-of-a-kind opportunity. In my eyes, it's the last chance for Dysart to meaningfully grow. There is no other property like that, no other acreage around that is as developable as this land. If I didn't think this was a good deal for the municipality, I would have never made it. I don't think this is a risk at all.

"The other benefit is that it backs onto municipal property on Industrial Park Road. So, there could be two access points, which is a big deal. That was a big reason why we bought it, too."

Fearrey said once he settled on terms with Hodgson he took the proposal to council where, in-camera, the other six members unanimously supported the purchase.

A County-based real estate agent, speaking to *The Highlander* anonymously, said they were surprised by this deal. They noted the cost of vacant land had dropped, on average, by 20 to 25 per cent over the past year. They also said 100 acres of vacant, non-waterfront land in the County typically costs between \$300,000 and \$500,000 – or \$3,000 to \$5,000 per acre. The township paid approximately \$19,000 per acre for this land.

Fearrey felt the parcel is well-worth what the township paid given its proximity to Haliburton village and the work that's already been done to it; a sentiment shared by Wilson.

"I know that property like the back of my hand... this is a tremendous deal for the township. It's worth way more than what they paid," Wilson said. "The only reason I sold for what I did was because I wanted to see it developed... and I didn't want to do it anymore."

Hodgson refrained from commenting on specifics of the deal, saying only that he "believes this is a very exciting opportunity for Dysart."

Authorities weigh in

The Highlander reached out to several provincial authorities and agencies for comment on the deal. With Fearrey previously going on record to state the township would not develop the land themselves – instead looking to sell, potentially for profit, there were concerns this could be seen as speculating on real estate, therefore an inappropriate use of taxpayer dollars.

Sherine Williams, spokesperson for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, said there were no concerns given the land is earmarked for development. "Municipalities have the tools to make decisions regarding local matters, including related to the acquisition and disposal of real estate by the municipality," Williams said.

Ashley Bursey, from the Ontario

Ombudsman's office, said there hadn't been any official complaints over the deal. "We don't comment or speculate on matters we haven't reviewed."

The Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO) administers the rules real estate agents, brokers and brokerages must follow provincially. Commenting on Hodgson representing both sides, RECO said, "multiple representation is prohibited in Ontario unless necessary disclosures are made and the parties consent." Hodgson did disclose his interest in OVC and Dysart did consent.

Next steps

Fearrey said council intends to move quickly, wanting to see ground broken within two years.

The mayor said at least three developers had already reached out about partnering with the township. However, he said a thorough assessment of the site is needed before any decision is made. He wants the township to hire a consultant to provide a roadmap for the best path forward.

Fearrey said the bulk of any project will centre on residential development, but feels the site could be the perfect home for a new arena and curling club. He said he'd like to see the current facilities, on Mountain Street behind town hall, transformed into high-density housing. He feels there's enough space at the CR 21 property to accommodate another long-term care home, too, noting the township has been in contact with Extendicare.

He noted council is negotiating a deal to expand the sewage treatment plant to accommodate any development at the site.

"It's going to take us some time to get our ducks in a row. I think we need a consultant if we're to do this right. We need a development strategy. This is bigger than just a one-off housing project. This is like building another community. I think, once done, this can be a real model in Haliburton County," Fearrey said.

ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS NEWS

Hawk Lake waste options

Responding to ongoing public concerns over the closure of the Hawk Lake landfill in 2021, council asked environmental manager, Melissa Murray, to come up with area waste management service delivery options.

Working with a consultant, she presented options during a Dec. 14 meeting, at which councillors expressed interest in a stationed collection vehicle.

In the fall, the director of waste management with the District of Muskoka spoke to council about its stationary truck. They have a lakeside collection program. Council also heard from residents in the fall.

Mayor Liz Danielsen said the issue had been “really challenging” with council already having twice reaffirmed its original decision to close the landfill and expand the Maple Lake site. She said there were benefits and pitfalls in revisiting decisions. “Part of me thinks we should stick with the status quo.” However, she said they had made a commitment to taxpayers to look at options.

Deputy mayor Jennifer Dailloux said she was “very keen to consider” the stationary collection vehicle. She said they would not have to tamper with the closed down site and it could be used to offer similar services elsewhere in the township, where people have long commutes to landfills.

Coun. Sabrina Richards said the Muskoka model, with its “fancy truck” is probably beyond what Algonquin Highlands can do, however, she said they could look at a more affordable transportation option, such as pick-up truck hauling a flatbed trailer with bins. She noted the vehicle could be used by other township departments when not parked for waste collection. She suggested one or two central locations, as

opposed to lake pickups.

Council agreed they’d like Murray to investigate further, looking at seasonal collection only, and report back to council. Richards indicated the community’s support for the concept. The cost would still have to be determined and it was suggested a service – if adopted – would not likely start until 2025.

Dorset Rec Centre update

Council heard Dec. 14 that the Dorset Rec Centre may reopen to the public in February.

Director of public works, Adam Thorn, updated council on the project at the meeting, saying the building had been cleaned out, spray foam insulated in the basement, basement walls finished, the majority of electric work done, and drywall back up. “Been pretty busy in there, continuously,” he said.

Danielsen asked if they are on schedule for a February completion and Thorn said barring any delays, they are.

He also discussed with council redesign of the upstairs area, relocating bathrooms to better open up the space. It would still have public access computers and it was suggested a gathering area with an electric fireplace and comfortable seating. They are also looking to do exterior design work, such as a covered entry, walkway, outdoor space for events, and potential area for future electric vehicle chargers. They are also looking into updated signage. The library will also return to the centre. The building has been closed for four years. *(Algonquin Highlands news compiled by Lisa Gervais).*



The Dorset Rec Centre has been closed for four years. *File.*

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MINDEN HILLS NEWS

Alcohol container returns

Minden Hills is looking into setting up an alcohol container return program at landfills and transfer stations.

Director of public works, Mike Timmins, said their new environmental officer has no issues with such a program.

He said he was tabling the report for information only at the Dec. 14 meeting, "but I think it's a good program to get rolling."

He said in the new year, they'll put out a request for interest to the service clubs in town that might like to participate, and they will iron out details based on the interest they receive, including how to divide the program equitably among groups.

Financially, Timmins said the matter would go to 2024 budget deliberations but they expect a maximum cost of \$8,000, including purchasing some sheds.

Coun. Tammy McKelvey queried whether they should start with Scotch Line, as she was not sure there would be the volume at other sites. Timmins said they could pilot the program at Scotch Line.

Fire master plan

Fire chief Shain Duda urged council to approve a fire master plan.

Duda said the other three lower-tier townships had already signed off on one, but councillors balked at the idea at a Nov. 9 meeting.

However, he said the plan will help to identify future needs of the service in the township. He said it's a full review of the fire department now, and where it needs to go, including assets, such as equipment and staffing.

"A fire master plan is a great document to have to plan ahead for future endeavours." He added, "this is a great way for fire services to work together."

Mayor Bob Carter asked if the contractor was doing four individual plans, or trying to bring it together in some way.



Minden Hills council meets again Jan. 11. *File.*

Duda said it would be a plan for each municipality but also contain recommendations on how all four departments can work together in the long-term.

Coun. Pam Sayne asked if the consultant would look at things such as building higher than three storeys, which cannot happen now due to fire truck ladder heights. Duda said that could be part of the plan.

CAO Cynthia Fletcher said it would be "a shame" if Minden Hills opted out, as it is intended to be a forward-looking document. She said it would examine growth, modernization, IT needs, equipment

needs, and possible shared agreements for equipment.

Duda said the price tag is \$33,000, to be spent in 2024.

McKelvey said she would have preferred it be a Countywide plan, especially since Minden Hills is already working on a strategic plan and an asset management plan.

Sayne felt the township needed the plan "and a beginning to get all of us (four departments) on the same page."

Council voted in favour. (*Minden Hills news compiled by Lisa Gervais*).

A MESSAGE FROM



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OPP NEWS

Alleged theft from business

Bancroft OPP have charged a person following a report of a theft at a business.

Police said that on Jan. 1, shortly before 8 p.m., they responded to a report of a theft. They added the investigation resulted in one person being arrested.

They said a 21-year-old from Wilberforce has been charged with the Criminal Code offence of Theft Under \$5,000.

The accused was released from custody and is scheduled to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Bancroft on Feb. 13.

No other details were released.

Arrest in connection with domestic assault

On Dec. 29, 2023, at approximately 8 a.m., Peterborough County OPP said they received a call reporting a domestic assault.

They said officers attended and spoke

with a complainant. They added they were advised there was an altercation after the complainant attempted to wake their partner to go to work. The complainant suffered minor injuries.

As a result, a 66-year-old male from Minden Hills was arrested and charged with assault.

The accused is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Peterborough at a later date.

No other details were released. (*OPP news compiled by Lisa Gervais*).

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2024 AT 7PM
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NOTICE: SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL & PUBLIC MEETING – 2024 BUDGET PROCESS

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills will be holding a Public Meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at 9:00 am during its Special Council Meeting regarding the 2024 Budget Process. To view the full notice and for more information visit www.minden hills.ca or contact our office at 705-286-1260.

TheHighlander

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To tell the story of Haliburton County each week.

To be a source of information and inspiration through stories and ideas.

To report on issues, people and events important to the community.

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

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

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Housing has to be the focus

By Mike Baker

There have been a lot of lingering questions about Dysart’s recent \$1.725 million deal to acquire 91.5-acres of vacant land outside Haliburton village.

Why this parcel? Why so much money? What does Dysart plan to do with it?

We touched base with the key players involved in the deal – notably Dysart mayor Murray Fearrey and local businessmen Paul Wilson and Andrew Hodgson. They were all aligned in thinking this property is the last chance Dysart has to meaningfully grow Haliburton village. Debatable given the swathes of empty land heading out of town along Hwy. 118.

Though, given the acreage is close enough to town that it could easily tie into the municipal sewer system and connects to land Dysart owns along Industrial Park Road, potentially creating a second access point to any future development, I definitely see the upside.

Wilson, who has made a career out of developing vacant land in the Highlands, believes the property could accommodate more than 200 new homes. Fearrey said he sees a range of housing options at the site, from single family detached to multi-unit residential – apartments and condos.

If there’s one thing we need more of in Haliburton County, it’s housing. With experts predicting our population could grow by as many as 10,000 people over the next 30 years, we need places where those people

can live. From that perspective, I do see this as a win.

It is a gamble though, and the fact it’s being made using taxpayer money is cause for concern. Former mayor Andrea Roberts correctly surmised a council’s job is to ensure the municipality is as risk averse as humanly possible. Any number of things could happen over the next few years to jeopardize this development.

Fearrey said it was the township’s intention to sell the land to a builder to develop. With how unstable the economy seems heading into 2024, what happens if we enter into another recession? What if, once everyone has done their homework, there’s no outside interest to develop the land? The township would be in an incredibly difficult position.

It is concerning too that Fearrey appears to have negotiated this deal himself before involving the rest of council.

Ever since the October 2022 municipal election, there’s been an awkward perception that Dysart council has become a one-man operation, with Fearrey calling the shots. Hearing how the mayor first contacted Wilson to inquire about the land, and then dealt with Hodgson directly on the finer details, before bringing it back to his fellow elected officials, feels off.

The mayor has done this previously. He was instrumental in the deal that brought the Gardens of Haliburton retirement residence to town during a previous term. That

arrangement has worked out well for the town. Maybe this will too.

The night of his acclamation, Fearrey told *The Highlander* he would solve Haliburton’s housing crisis this term. At the time, it seemed a massive stretch – it still does – but this deal at least presents some hope that more housing options, and substantial ones at that, are coming down the pipeline.

The one thing that leaves me scratching my head is the talk of a new arena and curling club. While they would be nice things to have, you have to wonder where the money is coming from. The final cost of Minden’s new arena was north of \$13 million – and that was pre-inflation. Adding a second building to that, you’re likely talking in the ballpark of \$20 million. Dysart doesn’t have that kind of money and borrowing it would cripple the township, and its taxpayers, financially for decades.

A shiny, new arena should not be a priority. As much as the Minden-Haliburton rivalry still burns bright, and things like arenas are used as points in a nonsensical game of one-upmanship, housing has to be the number one focus here. I hope council keeps sight of that.

CLIMATE CORNER

Climate heroes from 2023

Despite the Department of Justice asking her to dismiss it, U.S. judge Ann Aiken sent a landmark youth climate lawsuit, *Juliana v. United States*, to trial, saying, “this catastrophe is the great emergency of our time and compels urgent action. As this lawsuit demonstrates, young people - too young to vote and effect change through the political process - are exercising the institutional procedure available to plead with their government to change course. The judiciary is capable and duty-bound to provide redress for the irreparable harm government fossil fuel promotion has caused.”

In Canada, Justice Donald J. Rennie sent a similar case to court, supporting “the claim of a right to a healthy and livable environment...” This case, *La Rose v. His Majesty the King*, allows 15 Canadian youth to make the constitutional challenge “that they are already being harmed by climate change and the federal government is violating their rights to life, liberty, and security of the person under section 7 of Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms for failing to protect essential public trust resources.”

Our Children’s Trust, the David Suzuki Foundation, and the Pacific Centre for Environmental Law and Litigation are backing this lawsuit that asks the Federal Court of Canada to declare government’s conduct violates the Charter and the government’s public trust duties.

Judge Rennie also pushed to trial a case

brought by two Wet’suwet’en House groups, agreeing that climate change poses a “threat to their identity, to their culture, to their relationship with the land and the life on it, and to their food security.”

Judge Rennie wrote, “climate change’s current and potential effects are widespread and grave, they include loss of land and culture, food insecurity, injury and death.” He quotes the Supreme Court reference to the federal Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, “climate change is an existential challenge, a threat of the highest order to the country, and to the future of humanity, which cannot be ignored.”

After months of intense campaigning with multiple freedom of information requests, a group of Ontarians from Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!) successfully obtained provincial documents for public viewing. This win finally allows public access to the report that a provincially- appointed Advisory Panel on Climate Change presented in Queen’s Park over two years ago. The report is said to be a guide for climate change adaptation - time sensitive and critical. “The province’s ability to adapt to the ecosystem risks of climate change will depend on informed, forward-thinking governance. With few exceptions, climate change adaptation of species, ecosystems, and ecosystem services requires public sector leadership,” the report says.

Cultural Survival raised over \$1 million to support Indigenous land defenders around the world, providing training in climate

change mitigation, food sovereignty, community empowerment, communication projects, and protection of forests - standing against giants like Nestle, Exxon, and Shell. Achievements include training women broadcasters, writers, reporting to the UN on human rights violations, and sending a delegation to COP28.

Project Drawdown expanded the Drawdown Roadmap, a science-based strategy for climate solutions. The documentary *Drawdown’s Neighbourhood* showcases dozens of climate heroes in the U.S.

Reboot Food successfully campaigned for sustainable foods, away from livestock farming. Germany announced 38 million Euros to promote alternative protein and shift to plant-based agriculture. Spain is investing seven million Euros in research. The UK is launching an ‘innovation hub’ for research into alternative proteins. The Netherlands is supporting precision fermentation.

Brazil is taking JBS (the world’s biggest meatpacker) to court for using cattle raised on illegally deforested lands in the Amazon.

See ClimateHeroes.org for stories from around the world.

NEXT: How you can be a climate hero.

By Dr. Nell Thomas

Funded by the Government of Canada

LETTERS

Deer bylaw complaint-driven

Dear editor,

In 2023, Dysart council passed a new bylaw that prohibits the year round feeding of deer in ward one and parts of ward two.

If you are in violation, you can be given a \$150 Provincial Offences Act fine and a \$100 municipal administrative penalty. In 2023, the Stop Deer Feeding Property Owners Coalition, made up of many local residents, created a petition and canvassed the village for support. The vast majority of residents were in favour of this ban.

As stated in our presentation to council, public awareness of the bylaw is critical to the success of reducing the urban deer population.

Some people who fed deer in the past have now stopped. Through the bylaw process, and information presented from highly-regarded scientific and government institutions and professional wildlife managers, they and others are now better educated on all the negative aspects of feeding deer.

It is important to note that ultimately, the bylaw is dependant on enforcement which is complaint based. So, the purpose of this letter is to inform residents who observe people in violation of the bylaw or who may not be aware of the ban, on how to deal with these occurrences.

If you see someone in the area covered by the bylaw feeding deer there is a simple form on the municipal website (dysartetal.ca) where you can report this. At the top of the page click on ‘report a concern’, then fill out the online complaint form and submit. You can also call 705-457-1740 and ask for bylaw enforcement. To see this bylaw, restrictions and coverage area go to the municipal website.

The coalition is confidant that awareness and enforcement of this bylaw will lead to a deer herd that is more in balance with its natural habitat. This will result in reducing the many conflicts we are currently experiencing.

Chris Bishop
Haliburton

Sam Slick Park

Dear editor,

I read with some confusion the articles in both local newspapers regarding Sam Slick Park and the concepts, I guess, about political correctness.

There is no doubt that the caricature depictions of the attitude of Sam Slick towards Black people are somewhat rude and possibly construed as demeaning. However, those caricatures were not created by T.C. Haliburton. They were created some 30 years after the publication of the book.

T.C. Haliburton was considered a literary humorist in his time of writing. It was the tongue in cheek comments on the society of the time.

Are we to ban reference to Sam Slick because of a caricature created by someone else years after the publication of his work?

Should Shakespeare’s works that end in

PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Josh Bales recently captured this image of a hawk that flew and landed on a hydro line.

tragic suicide be banned for promoting such activity?

Should Green tragedies be put on literary hold because of prejudice to certain peoples?

Should any reference to the Shaw Festival be eliminated because of the attitudes of G.B. Shaw that came out in his writings? Were they his thoughts or was he reflecting the attitude of society of the time?

You cannot rewrite history by inserting into it your so-called principles of today.

The park is a park. If it offends you, don’t use it.

But really the controversy is as Shakespeare said, “much ado about nothing,” or in modern song ‘smoking cigarettes and watching Captain Kangaroo oh don’t tell me I have nothing to do.’

Let’s not get slickered by modern Sam Slicks. We would all do best by reading all of the works by T.C. Haliburton and study what he was trying to say.

David M. Bishop
Haliburton

STR bylaw support

Dear editor,

I just read your article in *The Highlander* (Dec. 21, 2023) with regard to the two people who came to Highlands East council to delay the STR bylaw.

The items mentioned are the same worn-out thoughts that have been raised many times throughout the years this bylaw has been bounced around by councils here.

The Tiny Township issue has been made known by the *Toronto Star* and a person in Toronto who bought a cottage he can no longer afford.

STRs should not be viewed as a fix for property owners that can no longer afford their properties, while neighbours are impacted.

I know the STR situation quite well in Niagara-on-the-Lake and the STR bylaws work well there. I suggest the council look at municipalities that have had success at regulating STRs and not dwell on possible outcomes in Tiny. The federal government has also recently passed legislation to support the regulation of STRs, identifying this as an item that needs to be dealt with.

Anyway, I hope the council will move forward and put the bylaw in place by this summer. If it needs fine tuning after, then so be it.

I think it is time to look after the majority of people who want to enjoy their cottages versus giving in to a small group who want to carry on doing whatever they want regardless of their impact on the neighbourhood. It is time to move ahead.

Brian W. Tink
Algonquin Highlands

Thanks for the roadworks

Dear editor,

I wrote a couple of letters condemning our local authorities for allowing the Bobcaygeon Road to fall into a pathetic state of disrepair.

Now I am writing one to say thank you from all the residents of the Bobcaygeon Road and Brady and Kushog lakes area for making the trip to town much easier.

Also, on behalf of all the businesses in town that will benefit from the increased flow in business traffic into the downtown core now that Bobcaygeon Road doesn’t have to be avoided at all costs.

Not to mention the real estate industry, which will likely see an uptick in business as visitors coming from Muskoka will not be abandoning their search and fleeing in terror after driving their Lexus or Porsche down the dirty, axle-breaking road that was. It’s all about traffic flow. A job well done.

Doug Macnab
Minden



Some Oakview Lodge and Marina co-livers.

JANUARY

Co-living to tackle housing shortage

Haliburton County has its own version of the Golden Girls – with Oakview Lodge and Marina getting out of the resort business and creating a co-living space on the shores of Little Hawk Lake. While it’s not a story of four older women, since the occupants are varying ages and genders, Oakview Coliving announced it would officially launch on June 1, 2023. There are already several people signed up to the venture.

Robinson’s closed

The former owner of Robinson’s General Store in Dysart told *The Highlander* they ran into financial hardship, which forced them to close the business Jan. 8. “We tried everything,” Mike Hinbest said in an interview. He said they did not release a statement to the community because they were devastated and did not know what to say. They also wanted to talk to staff first. Hinbest added interest rates going up so dramatically and so fast had a major impact. The store has since re-opened under new ownership.

CT scanner wanted

Coun. Walt McKechnie renewed calls for a CT scanner for the Highlands during County budget talks Jan. 11. McKechnie commented on the Haliburton and Minden hospitals “not being properly equipped with a CT scanner” during discussions on the EMS budget. The Dysart deputy mayor said they were discussing spending millions of dollars in 2023, for things such as new trucks and fixing bridges, but when it comes to a CT scanner, “it’s a priority for a lot of people, especially those getting older.” The Haliburton Highlands Health Services and its Foundation are now in the midst of a \$4.3 million campaign to raise money for a CT scanner and CT mammography.

Harburn Holdings gets sewer

Dysart et al council agreed to reserve around a fifth of the township’s available sewage capacity for a proposed 88-unit development overlooking Grass Lake. Paul Wilson, owner of Harburn Holdings, has been working with the township for more than two years as he seeks to develop 2.5 hectares along Peninsula Road. His proposal is to split the land into four lots that would each house multi-storey apartment and condo buildings.

FEBRUARY

County economy must diversify

The consultant working on the County’s economic development strategy said the community is telling them there is too much talk about a lack of worker housing, but not enough action. Tonya Kraan of Bridgenorth-based Stexer Harrop Consulting Group (SHCG) told council at its Jan. 25 meeting they want specific performance benchmarks in their final report, expected in the spring. Kraan added, “while the County has had tremendous success developing and marketing tourism, the challenging realities of today’s economy call for new directions, ideas and approaches to enhance economic growth, attract investment and ensure that opportunity continues to be a significant part of the County’s quality of life.

St. George’s flips last pancakes

An 84-year Haliburton tradition came to an end in February 2023 after St. George’s Anglican Church announced it was cancelling its annual Shrove Tuesday community pancake supper. The news was first delivered to the church’s congregation in late January, with Louise Sisson, who has helped out with the event since the 1970s and been lead organizer since 2015, saying a significant drop-off in volunteers was to blame.



St. George’s cancels Shrove Tuesday.

Minden man leads quake response

Minden’s Jacques Larroude was on the fourth floor of an apartment building in Gaziantep, Turkey when a major earthquake struck on Feb. 6. Working with CARE International, the wake up was “violent and unprecedented. “It was terrifying, especially as it lasted between 60 and 80 seconds, but felt like an eternity,” Larroude told *The Highlander*. He was “wobbly” as he got up and stood under his bedroom door frame to avoid ceiling debris, something he had been taught 13 years earlier when responding to the 2010 Haiti earthquake.

County parks public transit

County councillors were unwilling to board a bus Feb. 8 that would have allowed staff to prepare and put out a tender for a possible rural transit system for the Highlands. Director of economic development and tourism, Scott Ovell, and director of planning, Steve Stone, wanted a green light to develop and put out a request for proposals. Ovell said it could result in a detailed operational budget, implementation schedule and service delivery map, “that would clearly lay out how the transit service would operate, and how much it would cost to initiate and subsequently operate.” He added they weren’t asking council to say ‘yes’ to a service now, but possibly at a later date.

MARCH

Floodplain mapping

With words such as ‘bathymetric’ and ‘LiDAR,’ the process of flood mapping the Burnt and Gull River watersheds may sound complicated to residents, but the end goal is simple, County director of planning Steve Stone says. He told council Feb. 22 the main purpose of the project “is to prevent loss of lives, property and land caused by flooding.” Following 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019 floods, the County has partnered with the Gananaska and Kawartha Region conservation authorities on the work that began in 2017 and is poised to be completed in 2024.

Frost Centre on hold

When the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) announced it had purchased the Frost Centre on Jan. 8, 2021, the union said the historic Highlands site was “set for new life and a major lift” as a member resource and training centre. More than two years later, OPSEU executives involved in the purchase – Warren Thomas and Eduardo Almeida – are no longer with the union. Former president, Thomas, has retired and former first vice president and treasurer, Almeida, was defeated in a March 19, 2022 election. In addition, on Jan. 16, 2023, OPSEU said it had commenced legal action against Thomas, Almeida and Maurice Gabay, alleging financial improprieties and seeking damages of more than \$6 million. The claims have not been proven in court. Meanwhile, OPSEU was facing a civil lawsuit from a Muskoka-based contractor hired to do work at the site. The union has in turn filed a statement of defence and counterclaim.



Lawsuits have put a hold on Frost Centre.

Four-day work week a huge success

When the idea of transitioning to a compressed, four-day work week was brought to him in early 2022, Trevor Chaulk didn’t think the idea would take off. Fourteen months later, and business at Chaulk, a woodworking operation just outside Minden,

has never been better. “Probably the single best business decision I’ve made, certainly in terms of staff response,” Chaulk remarked. “We’ve seen noticeable increases in worker morale, we’ve been able to retain and attract staff in a hyper-competitive market, and our productivity has increased by over 25 per cent.”

Pioneer for independent women passes

From boarding a train to Yorktown, Sask. during the Second World War, to penning a newspaper series entitled Left to Tell at the age of 96, the woman for whom the Minden Legion is named has left few stones unturned. Mabel Doreen Hewitt (Brannigan) passed away March 15, just two months short of her 99th year.

Housing project ‘monumental’

A new intra-regional housing initiative, aiming to bring almost 500 affordable rental units to the Highlands by 2031, was labelled a “potential game changer” by former County CAO Mike Rutter. Representatives from the Eastern Ontario Wardens’ Caucus (EOWC) unveiled plans for its ‘Seven in Seven’ program to County council March 22. Peter Emon and Jim Pine, of the EOWC, said the project would construct 7,000 new affordable rental units across 13 counties in eastern Ontario over the next seven years, with a tab of at least \$3.1 billion. Units will range in size from bachelor, featuring a single-roomed living area, to three-bedroom apartments.

APRIL

Demolition begins at Wig

Demolition of the Wigamog Inn property on Lake Kashagawigamog commenced March 30, with some of the exterior cabins at the site being knocked down. The resort, located on Wigamog Road, has been slated for demolition for around a year. Owner Aurora Group previously told *The Highlander* it sourced a contractor to complete the work last September, with initial assessments taking place in January. Neighbours reported seeing workers on-site, with work on some of the outbuildings taking place. An excavator was also delivered to the property. Teardown of some cabins had been completed as of April 5.

P4P does bonds for housing

Haliburton County non-profit Places for People was planning to launch a new community bonds program in June, with president Jody Curry saying she expects the initiative to raise \$850,000. The announcement was made at the organization’s 2023 Haliburton County Housing Summit, held in Minden April 5. Addressing approximately 100 attendees, Curry said the money will be used to help the organization bring more affordable housing units to the County. The organization reached its goal in December.

Investments at landfills

Major changes are coming to several landfills across Haliburton County as all four lower-tier municipalities prepare to make sizable investments to reconfigure their largest sites and change the way they process materials. Algonquin Highlands is the furthest along, having committed around \$1.5 million to improve operations at the Maple Lake landfill. The township’s environmental

manager, Melissa Murray, said a new operations centre, located beside the existing landfill site, came online this past summer.

Minden ER slated for closure

It was announced in April that the Minden emergency department would be closing, with all emergency and in-patient services to be consolidated at Haliburton hospital, effective June 1. Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) made the announcement April 20, saying Minden and the surrounding area will be able to access emergency services at the Haliburton site, and staff working in the Minden emergency department will be transferred to the Haliburton emergency department.



People rally against Minden ER closure plans.

MAY

Haliburton Forest protecting old-growth

When Kristyn Ferguson first saw 20-hectares of old-growth at South Freezy Lake in Haliburton Forest, she was impressed by the 150-year-old trees. The Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC) employee remembers bird song ringing out from the canopy, butterflies fluttering around her, an amazing diversity of plants around her feet, and the wetlands that ringed the site. "I remember how special this place was. I could feel it. I could feel the history there and it just immediately became apparent that this was the project to be working on," she told a gathering at the Wolf Centre April 27. The project between NCC and the Haliburton Forest & Wild Life Reserve has led to the first recognized 'other effective area-based conservation measure' (OECM) within a privately-owned commercial forest in Canada.



Haliburton Forest's Malcolm Cockwell and NCCs Kristyn Ferguson.

Anti-privatization movement

The Haliburton Highlands Long-Term Care Coalition gathered near the Minden hospital May 4 to promote an upcoming Ontario-wide referendum on privatization of the province's public hospitals. Spokesperson Bonnie Roe said they're connected to the Ontario Health Coalition, which is spearheading the effort May 26 and 27. "Every community will be having a voting station," Roe said, adding, "we are so happy we have 29. Some big towns only have two or three so far."

EH! want fireworks banned

Susan Hay of Environment Haliburton! asked County councillors at their May 10 meeting to consider banning all personal fireworks displays, including their sale, in the Highlands. The EH! president, who is a retired registered nurse, told council she realizes such a ban may not be possible for this summer but could be considered for the summer of 2024. She added other considerations could include allowing only silent fireworks, or not setting them off in May when birds are migrating or their young hatching.

New realtor opens up shop

Ball Real Estate's executive vice-president, Gareth Jones, said moving into Haliburton County "was a logical extension" of the business they already do across a large swathe of the region, from Lakefield, to Apsley, Norwood, Hastings, Peterborough and Bobcaygeon. They held a grand opening at their new digs, at 199 Highland St. in downtown Haliburton, May 20. Owner Greg Ball started Ball Real Estate Inc. Brokerage in Lakefield in 2017.

JUNE

Consolidated ER opens

With last-ditch efforts now exhausted to postpone or reverse the Minden ER closure, the Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) consolidated County ER services in Haliburton June 1. Dr. Norm Bottum, acting chief of staff for HHHS, said, "we are all deeply committed to delivering high quality and safe care to our community. And, as we have always done, we will do everything in our power to ensure that all those in need of emergency care in Haliburton County can get it." He reiterated the decision to close the Minden ER, and consolidate services in Haliburton as of today, "has been an incredibly difficult decision for our leadership that was made after many years of searching for solutions that would stabilize and protect emergency services in the County over the long term."

Urgent Care Clinic

Minden Hills council has thrown its support behind a proposal from the Kawartha North Family Health Team (KNFHT) to open an urgent care clinic at the Minden hospital. A special council meeting was held June 5, where councillors discussed the potential operation with KNFHT executive director Marina Hodson. She said her organization currently operates clinics in Fenelon Falls and Bobcaygeon and feels an urgent care clinic would be the "best opportunity" to maintain health services in Minden after HHHS shuttered the community's emergency department June 1. The clinic is now in operation at the site of the former Minden ER.

Second degree murder

Haro Dahlke says the last time he saw his son, Dylan, was on Father's Day 2019. On June 16 of that year, the two visited and played chess, as they often did. Haro recalled that Dylan beat him for the first time ever that day. Now, Haro has only the memory of a son, frozen in time at the age of 29, after being stabbed to death by Robert Anthony Ferguson, 62, of Highlands East in the wee hours of July 6, 2019. It has taken four years for Dylan's family to see

justice for Ferguson, who grabbed a knife, went downstairs in his home, and stabbed a sleeping Dahlke in the back, ending the man's life. A Lindsay jury returned a verdict of guilty of second-degree murder June 27. Ferguson will be sentenced in February 2024.

Minden Subaru expanding

Tran LaRue is building for the next generation at Minden Subaru. Work on a new 6,200 sq. ft. service centre at the dealership, located on Hwy. 35, got underway late last month. It will see the facility grow to 12 service bays, from five, and expand its offerings for electric vehicle (EV) owners. LaRue said the \$2 million redevelopment will include the purchase and installation of a specialty hoist, used to lift EV batteries, reinforced tables to store and work on the batteries, and three-stage hydro technology to properly charge and service them.



Tran LaRue at Minden Subaru.

Plummer replaced

Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) announced June 12 president and CEO Carolyn Plummer is on an immediate medical leave of absence. Veronica Nelson, vice president and COO at Ross Memorial Hospital (RMH), has been appointed acting president and CEO. "The HHHS board of directors would like to thank CEO Plummer for her hard work and dedication, particularly during the past few months," said HHHS board chair, David O'Brien, in a press release. "We recognize the importance of looking after her health. We wish her all the best as she addresses her medical issues." Nelson has now been made permanent.

Next week July to December.

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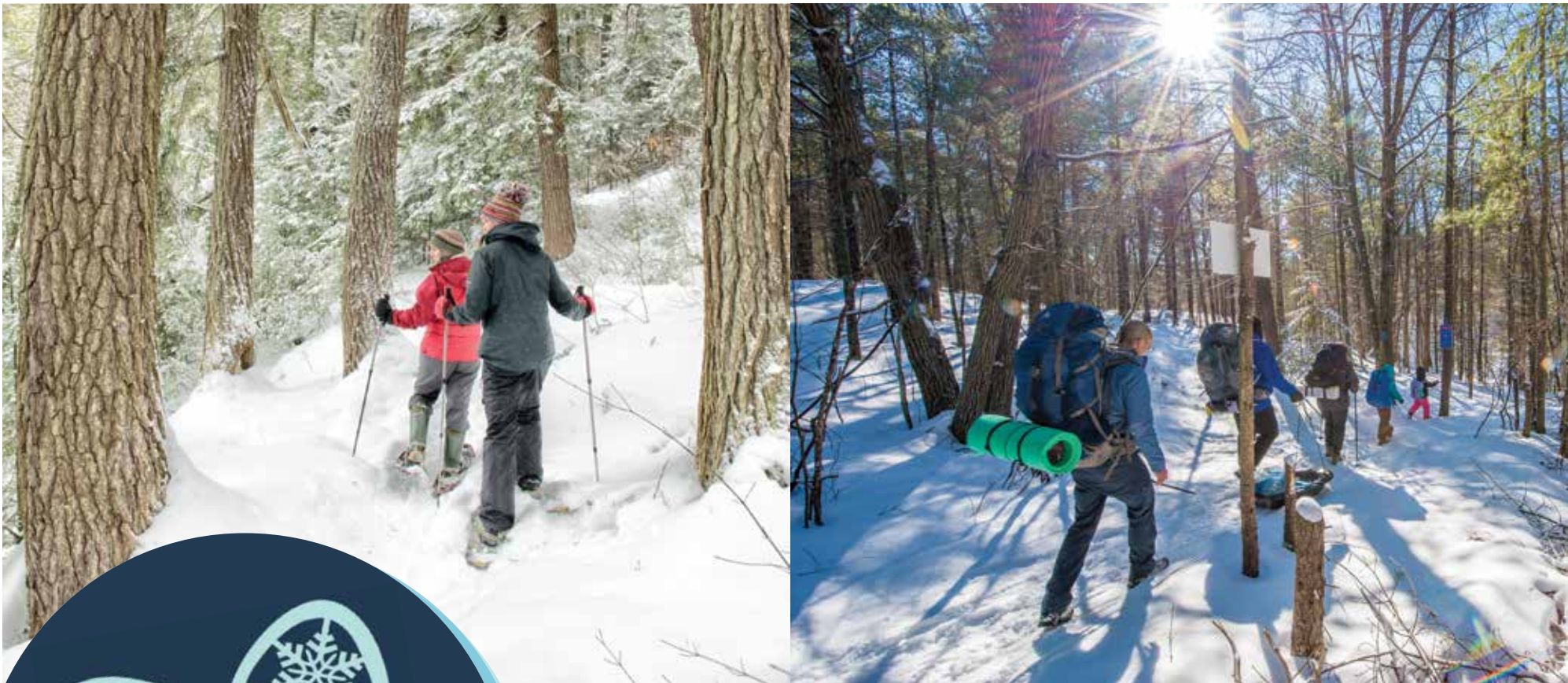
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Minden eatery cracks Top 100 restaurant list

By Mike Baker

Celebrating their tenth anniversary as owners of Heather Lodge resort, James and Maria Jennings received the perfect gift, with their restaurant recognized as one of the best rural eateries in the country by OpenTable.

An international online restaurant reservation service, OpenTable works with thousands of subscriber restaurants across Canada. The company released its Top 100 Restaurants of 2023 late last year, with Heather Lodge making the list. It was the only restaurant in Haliburton County recognized. The list featured 41 Ontario restaurants – with only 12 of those outside the GTA, 20 from British Columbia, 19 in Alberta, 16 from Quebec, three from Nova Scotia, and one from Newfoundland and Labrador.

“This is not something that was on our radar or that we were even pursuing. Our reviews are mostly positive, but to be recognized in this way, we’re kind of humbled,” Maria said. “We see this as a testament that we’re providing value and a good experience to our guests.”

Heather Lodge overlooks Twelve Mile Lake in Minden. The resort features 12 rooms and is adult-only. With the busy summer season now over, it has transitioned to a weekend-only operation. The restaurant is open for dinner Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, with breakfast options available on Saturday and Sunday.

While hotel guests are given priority, the Jennings’ say their restaurant is also open to the public. The kitchen is operated by three chefs, who cook everything to order, James said.

“We strive to do as fresh and local as possible. It’s a different menu every night, and we do lots of seasonally themed foods,” he said. “It is fine dining – we do three and four course options, with five entrees daily. We do fresh soup, a choice of three salads,



Owners and staff at Heather Lodge were thrilled after being named an OpenTable Top 100 restaurant in Canada. *Submitted.*

three appetizers, and some desserts. We have options for vegetarians and vegans and can accommodate a lot of dietary concerns.”

James noted the restaurant is Feast On certified, which recognizes businesses that source their menu options locally. Heather Lodge brings in produce from Abbey Gardens, meat from local farmers, and maple products from Wintergreen.

Maria said her team strives to provide an “exemplary culinary experience” to all guests.

“This is a two-and-a-half-hour meal where

people can sit and enjoy one another’s company. Nobody is being rushed out the door, nobody’s table is getting flipped for the next guest. Once you’re seated, that’s your table for the night,” Maria said.

The method is clearly working – of 235 reviews submitted through OpenTable, Heather Lodge has maintained a 4.9 out of five star rating.

“The lowest we’ve ever received is a three out of five. The main complaint we have is that it’s so hard to get in. In the summer, we make reservations about a month in advance,

during the winter, it’s better, usually only a couple days,” Maria said.

She added, “we could squeeze more tables in, but we manage our business based on the quality of experience we want to provide. We know where our perfect window is. We take what we know we can handle and give everything to make sure they have the best experience.”

For more information, visit heatherlodge.com.

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SALES ACHIEVEMENT

Theatre group excited for upcoming season

By Mike Baker

Eighteen months after launching a new theatre production company aiming to get more Highlands youth interested in acting, co-founders Amy Leis and Tim Nicholson feel like they've hit the jackpot.

Last year was a busy one for the Ctrl-ART-Del team. After bringing its debut production, *Cherubs*, to life on-stage at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion last spring, Leis and Nicholson have been hard at work preparing for the troupe's 2024 season.

There will be three shows – *A Valentine's Cabaret*, a one-night show at the pavilion Feb. 16; *Mustard*, their premiere production, will run for four shows May 2 to 4, also at the pavilion; and *The Wolves*, featuring an ensemble cast, plays five shows at the Haliburton Legion Aug. 15 to 17.

"We're really excited about this upcoming season... We have a lot of young performers who have gotten involved and will be making their stage debut, which was the whole reason [for forming] Ctrl-ART-Del," Leis said.

The duo worked with four youth at a series of workshops late in the summer, with three of them cast in this year's productions and the other apprenticing as stage manager.

Auditions held at the Haliburton Legion late last year were a huge success, Leis noted, with most roles for all three shows now filled.

"It was two, full, 12-hour days. There were some wonderful surprise moments – we had

several young kids that had never been on stage before come in and absolutely blow us away," Leis said.

Nicholson said the recent response, particularly to the open casting call, was overwhelming.

"The response we've had from the community has been incredible. After the success of *Cherubs*, we knew the demand was there. It's been a heartwarming ride. It's been validating. It feels like the ideas we had a year-and-a-half ago when we decided to do this – we were right. There is a place in the County for young contemporary theatre," Nicholson said.

The new season debuts with *A Valentine's Cabaret*, a collection of nine, 10-minute productions headlined by Jerelyn Craden, bringing her Maybelle Morton character, known to listeners of CanoeFM, to life on-stage for the very first time. The show boasts a 30-member cast, most of them teenagers, Leis notes.

The cabaret, promoted as a "wild romp of one act plays, improv and music for both the romantics and the cynics," will serve as a fundraiser for Ctrl-ART-Del's two feature productions.

Mustard is a Canadian dark comedy written by Kat Sandler, focusing on a 16-year-old girl having trouble shaking her childhood imaginary best friend. "It's a real coming-of-age story about having to accept change and the things we go through as we grow up," Leis said, noting the cast is made up of six



Local theatre group Ctrl-ART-Del held an acting workshop at the Haliburton Legion over the summer, attended by four youth. *Submitted.*

performers – all locals.

The 2024 season will end with *The Wolves*, which follows the trials and tribulations of a girls' indoor soccer team. Seven of the 10 characters included have been cast, with Leis and Nicholson still looking to round out the team.

"The roles are for three teenage girls – anyone who might be interested, get in touch and we'd be happy to set up an audition," Leis said.

For more information, or to schedule an audition, contact info@ctrlartdel.ca.

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School's Cool 'builds kids' confidence'

By Mike Baker

An online version of SIRCH Community Service's popular School's Cool program is starting up this month, with coordinator, Brittany Rance, saying there's space for up to 15 children.

The initiative has been running periodically since 1999, serving as an academic taster for kids preparing to enter the public school system. Rance noted the upcoming program is for children going into kindergarten in 2024.

"We like to say School's Cool levels the playing field for every child. The program is dedicated to boosting your child's confidence, getting them used to socializing with other kids, listening and responding to instruction, and learning new skills," Rance said. "We work on mastering the alphabet, numbers, problem-solving, language, and math."

The six-week program launches Jan. 15, running until Feb. 22, with four days of instruction – Monday to Thursday – for two hours each day.

The program is delivered by two instructors virtually via Google Classroom. Kits will be distributed to all participants, containing materials needed to complete activities. Rance said parents are required to accompany their child and assist with activities.

Participation is free, Rance noted.

This will be the second time the program has been offered virtually, following a pilot in October 2022. Rance believes there's lots of positives to online learning.

"It's a great opportunity for kids who can't get out to still have access to learning and see other kids," she said. "There's a lot of misconceptions about online... but with School's Cool, the instructors are really good about setting kids up for success. If we notice they're getting restless, we'll give them moving breaks, teach them ways to calm their body.



SIRCH School's Cool coordinator, Brittany Rance, said a six-week online program will run in the new year. Photo by Mike Baker.

"Setting kids up for success is the primary goal. It's important for them to start learning things on their own, getting used to being in a learning environment so that when they go into school it's not so much of a shock. There's a lot of anxiety around a child taking that next step and going to school. We work to ease that stress and build confidence as much as possible," she added.

To learn more, or see if spots are still available email info@sirch.on.ca or call 705-457-1742.




**County of Haliburton
2024 Budget Deliberations**

The County of Haliburton wishes to provide PUBLIC NOTICE that Haliburton County Council will be discussing the 2024 budget at their regular scheduled Council meeting on Wednesday, January 24, 2024.

And that further 2024 budget discussions will occur thereafter at regularly scheduled Council meetings until the budget is approved.

The agendas for the above noted meeting dates can be viewed online at <http://haliburton.civicweb.net>

Gary Dyke, CAO/County Clerk
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Telephone: 705286-1333
or 1-866-886-8815
Fax: (705) 286-4829
E-mail: gdyke@haliburtoncounty.ca



**Notice
Tariff of Fees**

Notice is hereby provided that the Council of the County of Haliburton will be reviewing and considering amendments to the Tariff of Fees By-law-4145 at the Council Meeting to be held on January 24, 2024. Meeting to commence at 9:00 a.m.

Gary Dyke, CAO/County Clerk
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Huskies head to All-Star break on a high

By Lisa Gervais

The Haliburton County Huskies go into the OJHL All-Star break this weekend with a five-game winning streak since returning from Christmas holidays.

The blue and white racked up a 4-1 win over the Toronto Patriots Dec. 29. Lucas Stevenson led the way with two goals, while Patrick Saini and Charlie Fink chipped in the others.

They backed that up with a New Year's Eve victory over rival Wellington Dukes. The 4-2 decision saw tallies from Saini, Alex Bradshaw with two, and Ty Petrou.

The squad rang in the new year with a 5-4 win over the Stouffville Spirit Jan. 4. Goal scorers were Lucas Marshall, Stevenson, Saini, Hunter Martell, and Fink.

January 6 saw the Huskies beat their Hwy. 35 rivals, the Lindsay Muskies, 4-1. Bradshaw tallied in this one as did Stevenson, Petrou and Saini.

And on Jan. 7, the Huskies squeaked out a 3-2 decision over the Pickering Panthers. Stevenson, Saini and Petrou all found the back of the net.

Commenting on the streak - that has seen the team climb to fourth place in the East Conference with a record of 23 wins, 14 losses, and two ties for 48 points - team captain Saini said, "everyone's really starting to figure out what we have to do to win."

He added, "it's not easy to win day in and day out. It takes work but I think we're starting to figure out winning habits. It starts with practice. I think we have a lot of confidence because when you win games, you find your confidence. So, we're able to come back in games we're down and hold teams off. It's good."

While Saini, Petrou, Stevenson and Fink are no strangers to the tally sheet, Bradshaw has been chipping in as well as Marshall and D-man Martell. The captain said that's important.

"It's always nice to see the other guys put some in because when everyone's scoring, everyone's having fun."



Ty Petrou sets himself for a faceoff. Photo by Mike Baker.

All-Star celebration

Saini will be representing the Huskies at the All-Star celebration in Collingwood this coming weekend.

The event features games, a skills competition and gala community activities. The all-star game is 5 p.m. Jan. 13.

Saini said, "those things are a huge honour and they're a lot of fun so I'm hoping to go represent Haliburton County the best way I can and enjoy my time." Lucas Vacca has been named an alternate for the East team.

Meanwhile, Husky head coach and general manager, Ryan Ramsay, is coaching the prospects team and goalie Logan Kennedy has been named to that squad. Saini said the goalie deserved the pick as he has played well for the Huskies.

After the All-Star Celebration, the Huskies return to action on the road. They are scheduled to play in Toronto versus the Junior Canadiens Jan. 14.

"That's a huge game for us," Saini said.

The Huskies have just eight home games remaining on the 2023-24 regular season

schedule. They are next at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena Jan. 20.

"We had a lot of home games before the break so we're on the road a little bit more coming up," Saini said. "That's alright. I know that when we come home, the fans are going to be pumping and it's going to be a great atmosphere to play in. So, we'll be ready to play when we get the chance to play at home and we'll take care of business on the road."

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Top: Huskies captain Patrick Saini put up three points in a 4-1 win over the Lindsay Muskies Jan. 6. Photo by Ed McPherson/OJHL Images. Above: Gavin McGahey-Smith goes hard on the forecheck. Photo by Mike Baker.




A pair of Huskies tickets

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Austin Cunningham carries the puck into the Kawartha zone. Photo by Lisa Gervais.

Storm front crashes over Coyotes

In a quest for redemption against the Kawartha Coyotes from Omemee, the U11 Rep team unleashed a determined and electrifying performance at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena Jan. 6 that resonated throughout the game.

The team came out strong in the first period outplaying their opponents and keeping most of the play in their end. With only three minutes remaining in the period, Carter McCord capitalized on an opportune moment securing the first goal with help from Maddex Reynolds and Rowan Little.

The second period saw tension rising between the two teams with a penalty kill and a powerplay for the Storm. A solid hustle from defencemen Blake Little and R. Little helped top scorer Austin Cunningham take the lead to 2-0. A few minutes later, winger Reynolds, assisted by Lucas Lawson, closed the period at 3-0.

The final period had copious amounts of penalties from

both sides but goalkeeper Liam Scheffee kept his composure and showed off his skills in spectacular fashion by only conceding one goal, while his teammates added four more to make it a 7-1 win.

Cunningham got two more goals to get a well-deserved hat trick, while McCord and Reynolds each found the back of the net for a second time. Defenceman Wyatt Braun's slap shots from the blueline almost found the back of the net, while wingers Will Brown, Ethan Draker, Chase Casey and Reynolds applied continuous pressure, forcing the other team to cough up the puck.

The game concluded with the U11 Rep team emerging victorious, exhibiting not only redemption but also a remarkable display of teamwork, skill and unwavering determination on the ice. Thank you to all the local fans who came out and looking forward to the second half of the season. (Submitted).

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	U11 Curry Chevrolet VS Kawartha • 8-1 W	U13 Cheryl Smith RE/MAX VS South Muskoka • 8-1 W
	U15 The Pepper Mill VS South Muskoka 6-3 W	U18 Sharp Electric VS South Muskoka 0-3 L
	U13 Cheryl Smith RE/MAX VS South Muskoka • 8-0 W	
Jan. 7	U13 Walker's Heating & Cooling VS Kawartha • 3-3 T	



Liam Scheffee

Liam's determination to protect the pipes and his team was on display. He displays constant effort and passion. His first year in net is really something to be proud of.



Carter McCord

Carter is a strong offensive centre who worked hard to keep the game in the Coyotes end while adding two to the scoreboard.



Chase Casey

Chase's consistent effort and aggressive gameplay assisted the Storm in penalty kills and holding the scoreboard in our favour. Photos by Tim Tofflemire.

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Red Hawks back in action

The Haliburton Highlands Secondary School boys’ basketball teams squared off against Fenelon Falls prior to the Christmas break. The juniors defeated the Falcons 46-40 while the seniors won 42-35. Both teams were scheduled to be back in action Jan. 10. Results were not known as of press time.

Top: Junior boys’ basketball player, Fynn Gooley, goes up for the layup in a Dec. 21 game against Fenelon Falls at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School. The team went on to record a 46-40 victory. Above: Senior player, Sawyer Boutin, drives the basket during a Dec. 21 match versus Fenelon Falls. Photos by Lisa Gervais.



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The Township is interested in increasing resident access and participation in deposit return systems while providing opportunities to give back to the local community.

- Interested organizations must be local and the proceeds must go towards benefiting the community.
- Responsibilities of the Community Partner include:
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 - Pay an annual administration fee of \$200. These funds go towards the maintenance of the storage shed, signage, and maintaining the collection area;
 - Provide annual reporting on total quantities collected.

When submitting notice of interest, organizations must provide a brief summary of their organization, where funds are being utilized in the community, and preference of Waste Disposal Site for the collection location.

The deadline to submit this information is February 21, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. Please submit notice of interest to ccosh@mindenhills.ca.



For more information please contact the Manager of Waste Facilities at 705-286-1260 ext. 572 or by email ccosh@mindenhills.ca



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A past rehearsal for The Sound of Music. File.

Festival announces ‘exciting’ lineup

By Lisa Gervais

Summer 2024 may seem a long way off, but the Highlands Summer Festival (HSF) recently announced its July and August offerings.

HSF president Brian Kipping said, “we have an exciting line-up of live theatre and concert offerings for this summer. I know our patrons will find it an enjoyable list with lots of variety.”

Up first will be the musical comedy, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Spokesman Jack Brezina said the award-winning musical will test those who suffer from ortographobia (the fear of spelling a word incorrectly).

“The tale follows an eclectic group of six mid-pubescents as they vie for the spelling championship of a lifetime. While candidly disclosing hilarious and touching stories from their home lives, the tweens spell their way through a series of words. The show will have audience participation and upbeat music,” Brezina said. It opens July 2 for nine performances.

Second up, the festival revisits a favourite of theatre patrons worldwide, William Gibson’s *The Miracle Worker*. “Twelve-year-old Helen Keller lived in a prison of silence and darkness. Deaf, blind, and mute from an illness as a baby, with no way to express herself or comprehend those around her, she flew into primal rages against anyone who tried to help her, fighting with a strength born of furious desperation. Then Annie Sullivan came. Half-blind herself, but possessing an almost fanatical determination,

she would begin a frightening and incredibly moving struggle to tame the wild girl no one could reach,” Brezina said. The Tony award-winning play opens July 15 for eighth performances.

The Canadian folk trio, and award-winners, The Good Lovelies bring their country/folk repertoire, with tinges of pop, roots, jazz and sometimes hip-hop, July 24-26, for three performances.

Then, Gail, a beekeeper, and Earl, both recently estranged from their spouses, and living across from each other on a country road, find their lives turned upside down in the Mark Crawford comedy, *The Birds & The Bees*. “Gail’s daughter, Sarah, running away from an unhappy marriage, returns home unexpectedly. Add the arrival of Ben, an over-eager graduate student there to determine the cause of the collapse of Gail’s bee population, and it presents an engaging mix of people with lots to teach about the birds & the bees.” This show for 13 and ups opens July 28 for six performances.

The season ends with the return of Leisa Way and her Wayward Wind Band’s *Opry Gold*. Their latest concert features popular country songs from the last few decades. The show opens Aug. 4 for five performances.

“With a line-up like that, patrons will want to see all five shows,” artistic producer Scot Denton said.

For more information, see highlandssummerfestival.on.ca; call 705-457-9933 or 855-457-9933 or mail Highlands Summer Festival, Box 938, Haliburton, Ontario, K0M 1S0.

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NOTICE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT

Subsection 17 (34) of the Planning Act

County File No.: 4624-OPA-003
Subject Lands: the geographic Municipality of Dysart et al in its entirety
Applicant: Municipality of Dysart et al

TAKE NOTICE: A complete application has been received by the County of Haliburton to amend the Official Plan of the Municipality of Dysart et al. This proposal will be posted for a 30-day public review and comment period until **February 12, 2024**. If you have any questions, or would like to submit your comments in writing, please do so to the County's Planning Department.

THE PURPOSE: The purpose and effect of the proposed amendment is to update the policies relating to additional dwelling units, the requirements for complete applications and the types of planning applications that require preconsultation with the Municipality, to strengthen the policy in response to recent changes to the Planning Act, which are designed to provide a range and mix of housing options and densities while streamlining the application process.

STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING: A statutory Public Meeting was held by the municipality on December 12, 2023 at the Council Chambers of the Municipality of Dysart et al. The Council of the Municipality of Dysart et al adopted the proposed Local Official Plan Amendment on December 12, 2023 by By-Law No. 2023-111.

REQUESTING NOTICE OF DECISION: If you wish to be notified of the decision of County Council in respect of the proposed local official plan amendment, you must make a written request to the Director of Planning, County of Haliburton.

Only individuals, corporations or public bodies may appeal a decision of the approval authority to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. A notice of appeal may not be filed by an unincorporated association or group. However, a notice of appeal may be filed in the name of an individual who is a member of the association or the group on its behalf.

No person or public body shall be added as a party to the hearing of the appeal unless, before the plan was adopted, the person or public body made oral submissions at a public meeting or written submissions to the council or, in the opinion of the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, there are reasonable grounds to add the person or public body as a party.

GETTING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Additional information regarding the application is available for public inspection at the County of Haliburton Administrative Office during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Dated at the Township of Minden Hills this 8th day of January 2024.

S. Stone, Director of Planning
County of Haliburton
11 Newcastle Street
P. O. Box 399
Minden, Ontario, K0M 2K0

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Terra Lightfoot is back in concert Jan. 27. Photo by Lyle Bell.

Musician excited to see some friends

By Lisa Gervais

Terra Lightfoot says she had such a great time playing in Haliburton in January 2023 that she wants to do it all over again.

The Haliburton County Folk Society is bringing Lightfoot and her band to the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 129 in Haliburton on Jan. 27.

Lightfoot, now a resident of the County, says she is feeling very much at home these days.

“Since we did this last year, I have gotten to know many more folks in the community, so I am excited to see some friends,” she said.

A recent campaign by the County’s tourism department, claiming the Highlands is ‘where the stars hang out’ appears to ring true for musicians who perform in the community, folk society spokesman Barrie Martin said.

He said Lightfoot is one of those stars. “CBC Music describes her as, ‘one of Canada’s best all around musicians... an amazing tour de force, the complete package. Her new album *Healing Power* is creating a buzz.’” Martin added *Spill Magazine* says, “‘you can actually feel that release

of personal energy that makes this album Lightfoot’s most accomplished yet’.”

With four studio albums to her credit, along with Polaris Prize and Juno Award nominations, Lightfoot is, according to Martin, “a singer/songwriter with a huge voice, big heart, and gutsy guitar that is full of reverb, short, repetitive hooks, and bouncy rhythms. Even if you attended her concert last year, this one offers a whole new set of songs, an abundance of talent, and love of community.”

The concert will start with a performance by Christina Hutt from the Huntsville area. Martin said, “she can fill a room with her rich, resonant, out-of-this era voice and move you with her honest, charismatic delivery. You can expect a little blues and soul and a lot of country.”

Tickets can be purchased at haliburtonfolk.com. To find out more about Lightfoot, visit terralightfoot.com

The show is presented by the Haliburton County Folk Society, a part of the Haliburton County Community Cooperative. For more information about the Co-op see haliburtoncooperative.on.ca.

EVENTS

Jan. 14, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Trappers workshop at Lloyd Watson Community Centre in Wilberforce. Join the Minden District Fur Harvesters and numerous vendors for displays, demonstrations, competitions and door prizes throughout the day. Admission by donation. Lunch available. Food will also be collected for the local food bank. For more information, call Ted at 705-448-2877.

Jan. 16, 1 p.m.
Creative Collaborations craft group - share your skills and learn some new ones. Bring your own project or work together with others on a featured project. Takes place weekly, every Tuesday, at St. George's Anglican Church. Beginners welcome. For more information, contact lynnhighgsthompson@haliburtonanglican.ca.

Jan. 18, 6:30 p.m.
Do you like to cook, play cards, hike, and spend quality time with other women? The Canadian Federation of University Women have interest groups in hiking, cuisine, wellness, cards and many more - just join your favourites. This women's advocacy group is open to all, with speakers at the monthly meetings. This month, hear an update on the Volunteer Dental Outreach program in Haliburton County. Available via Zoom. To register, visit cfuwvh.ca, or contact Gail Gotter at g_gotter@hotmail.com.

Jan. 22, 7 p.m.
The Wilberforce Heritage Guild invites you to attend its 2024 annual meeting at the Wilberforce Red Cross Outpost, 2314 Loop Rd. Everyone welcome. For more information, contact Barb Schofield at 705-448-2598 or wilberforcebarb@yahoo.ca.

Jan. 24, 1 p.m.
Travel for Seniors presentation, with Linda Coneybeare. Learn about new travel rules, post-COVID travel, insurance needs, types of travel, mobility issues and more. This event is free and takes place at St. George's Anglican Church.

Jan. 25, 7 p.m.
Environment Haliburton! and Seniors for Climate Action Now! present Rick Hill, an Indigenous historian, artist and educator who will speak about how to embrace the values necessary to ensure a sustainable world for future generations. Available via Zoom. To register, visit environmenthaliburton.org.

Jan. 27, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Aging Together as Community Haliburton Highlands conference 'Inspiring Creativity, Empowering Change' at Pinestone Resort. All ages are welcome. There is no charge. Register by Jan. 13 by emailing agingtogetherhc@gmail.com, or visit our Facebook page.

Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m.
The Lake Kashagawigamog Organization is hosting Ken Cox, southern region fire advisor to Ontario Aviation and Forest Emergency Services (a branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry) for a Zoom seminar 'The forest is on fire'. To register, visit lko.ca or call Kate's Burger Counter at 705-286-4554.

Feb. 2, 1 to 2:30 p.m.
The Minden Hills Cultural Centre and Haliburton County Public Library welcome you to join in a series of PA Day movies during the school year. There will be a free, family-friendly movie screening in the Welch Room at the cultural centre. No registration required. Snacks will be provided. Movies will be decided via vote at the Minden library, or online at haliburtonlibrary.ca.

Feb. 3, noon.
Minden & District Horticultural Society invites you to its annual pot luck event at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Minden (7 Bobcaygeon Rd.). Please bring your own mug, plate and utensils. Lunch will be followed by a presentation from guest speaker Marilyn Bodogh, 'Hearts and Flowers'.

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

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 129 Haliburton weekly activities
Mondays: Bridge at 1 p.m. in the Schofield Rm.
Tuesdays: League darts 7 p.m. Haliburton Army Cadets practice 6:30-9 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid euchre 1 p.m., main hall. Bingo is on a break, hoping to return in March.
Thursdays: General meeting third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. & ladies auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Meat draw, five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets \$2 per draw. Ed Pickard, MC. Friday fun darts 4:30 p.m. onwards.
Saturdays: 50/50 draw 4 p.m. Tickets \$1 each, available in the Clubroom.
Clubroom hours: Mon 3-6 p.m., Tues 3-9 p.m., Wed/Thurs 3-6 p.m., Fri 3-7 p.m. & Sat 3-6 p.m.
Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, for rental information call Cheryl Waller at 905-447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com/facility-rentals. Come on out and support Haliburton Legion Branch 129... everyone is welcome!

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 624 Wilberforce
Jan. 11: HHHS Social from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Open 2 to 6 p.m.
Jan. 12: Seniors' 55+ lunch at noon, open 2 to 9 p.m., fish and chips from 5 to 8 p.m.
Jan. 13: Open 2 to 6 p.m. Meat draw at 3 p.m.
Jan. 14: LA Breakfast from 9 to 11 a.m. Closed after breakfast.
Jan. 15 & 16: Closed
Jan. 17: Open 2 to 6 p.m. Darts at 2 p.m.

Pat and Phyllis Gallen Fish Derby Jan. 20 (weather and ice permitting). Register by Jan. 19 at 9 p.m. at the legion, or Jan. 20 at 10 a.m. at the Wilberforce Service Centre. Weigh in between 3 and 6 p.m. Hot chili for sale during the weigh-in.

If you are planning an event, our Ladies Auxiliary would be pleased to cater. Please call the branch at 705-448-2221 to arrange your event.

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 519 Cobocong Second Monday of the month: General meeting - 7:30 p.m. No meetings in January or February.
Tuesdays: Soup and sandwich lunch, 11:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Euchre - 1 p.m. Open Darts - 7 p.m.
First Wednesday of the month: Big Buck Bid Euchre from 11 a.m. \$15 per person.
Saturdays: Meat Roll at 3 p.m.
For more information call 705-454-8127

Royal Canadian Legion - Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden
Monday - Thursday: Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' Tuesday.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541

Weekly activities:
Karaoke: call for dates
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Tuesday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1-3 p.m., Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.



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2024 Audition Invitation

The Highlands Summer Festival is holding auditions for the following 2024 productions:

- The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (a musical)
- The Miracle Worker
- The Birds & the Bees

Saturday, January 27, from 10 a.m.
Sunday, January 28, from 12:30 p.m.
at St. George's Anglican Church
617 Mountain Street, Haliburton

Character descriptions and other important details, including how to register, can be found in the audition package, linked from the HSF home page at www.highlandsummerfestival.on.ca

Scot Denton – Artistic Producer
Melissa Stephens – Executive Producer

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OBITUARIES



In Loving Memory of
**Dorothy Wilson
(nee Playford)**
(Resident of Haliburton)

Passed peacefully at Highland Wood on Wednesday, December 27, 2023 at age 94. Wife of 70 years and best friend of the late Ken Wilson. Loving father of Paul (Kim), Debbie (Ed McCallum), John (Marilou Mizzan) and Tracey. Fondly remembered by her grandchildren Lauren (Chris), Adam (Ashley), Jeff (Jessica), Hilary (Ryan), Michael, Ryan (Joanne), Shawn (Alex), Lyndsey (Jonathan), Andrea (Melanie), Courtney (Monte), Brett (Lauren), Holly (Pablo), Andy, Carter and by her twenty-nine great grandchildren. Survived by sister Norma and brother Bill. Predeceased by siblings Stuart, Ethel, Muriel, Russ and Ken.

Dorothy was a long time resident of Haliburton. She was a stay-at-home mom until 1969, when she began working as a bookkeeper at Haliburton Lumber with her husband until they retired in 1989. She enjoyed being with her family, sewing, gardening and travelling with their many friends.

Private Celebration of Life

The family will hold a private Celebration of Dorothy's life. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation or a charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario (705) 457-9209.



In Loving Memory of
Thomas James "Tom" Burke

Passed away suddenly on Thursday, December 21st, 2023, at the age of 69.

Beloved husband of Joann for 41 years. Dear father of Talitha, Christina and her husband Pete and predeceased by Adam. Loving Grampa to Kayle, Morgan (deceased), Poet, Malia, Dawson, Denver, Olivia, Riley, Maya, McKenna, Logan, Lucas and Papa Tom to many. Dear brother of Carol (deceased), Barbara, Butch (deceased), Ed, Donald, John (Leona) and cherished son of the late Helen and Robert. Fondly remembered by his kids childhood friends Susie, Josh and his beloved dog Bella Helen.

Tom and Joann raised their three kids in the Parry Sound area after moving from BC in the early 80s. Tom coached Adam's hockey, all three kids in baseball and soccer, and also played on the adult leagues himself, developing a large social circle of hockey and baseball "family". He worked throughout his life as a carpenter, taking pride in his craftsmanship and dependability. After his first Ontario grandchild was born, he and Joann moved from Parry Sound to the Haliburton Highlands to be closer to Christina and her growing family. He loved his grandkids and being around them was one of his favourite pastimes! He finished off his working life at Timber Mart, where he met many new friends that he has continued to keep in touch with over the past few years since retiring in 2020.

To stave off the boredom of retirement, he started Burke's Birdhouses. He built bright, colorful birdhouses that he would sell and donate all of the funds to local charities. To date he has raised a total of \$4500 for nine different charities. After the loss of his son, Adam, in 2021, Tom eventually found his way back into his basement workshop to continue with his birdhouse building. We know he took that time to grieve his son, something that he never would recover from. We believe he found solace in that space, and we look forward to selling his remaining birdhouses to donate to what will be his final charity, Snowflake Meadows.

Friends are invited to visit the family at the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., 127 Bobcaygeon Rd., P.O. Box 427, Minden K0M 2K0 on Saturday, December 30, 2023 from 11:00 am until the time of the Funeral Service at 1:00 pm. Reception to follow in the Monk-Cray Family Centre at the funeral home. Cremation to follow.

In lieu of flowers, his family asks for donations to our local food bank, Snowflake Meadows (cheques only - he was halfway to his \$500 goal!) and Walkabout Farms, three organizations that he felt a deep respect for.



In Loving Memory of
**Jean Tyler
(nee Morrison)**

Peacefully at Haliburton Hospital on Sunday evening, January 7, 2024 in her 98th year. Beloved wife of the late Ron Tyler (1994). Loving mother of Sharon and Cathy (John). Predeceased by her siblings Lorna and Arthur. Fondly remembered by her many nieces and nephews.

Visitation & Funeral Service

Friends and family are invited to call at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario (705) 457-9209 on Friday morning, January 12, 2024 for a Funeral Service in the Chapel at 12 o'clock. (Visitation one hour prior) As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation would be appreciated by the family.



In Loving Memory of
**William "Roger" Frederick
Reginald Wilson**

Passed away peacefully in his sleep at home in Haliburton, on Tuesday, December 19, 2023 after a battle with cancer at the age of 68.

Loving husband, best friend, and "Perfect Match" of Laura (nee LeGuilloux) for 42 years. Loving father and friend of Thealynda (Bob) Saarimaki, Amy Wilson (Ryan Carey), Brandy Wilson and Angie Wilson. Beloved papa of Bradley, Emily, Liya, Caleb, Danté, Owen, Ciara, Khalid, Chelsea, Adler and Winslow. Dear son of the late William and Dorothy (nee Johnson) Wilson, and brother of Sheila (Steve) Berrigan, Susanne Kay, Shaughen Wilson, predeceased by Debbie Coulter and Peter Wilson. Fondly remembered by his family and friends.

Cremation has taken place. A celebration of Roger's life will be held in the spring/summer 2024 and will be announced.

Memorial Donations to the Point in Time "Youth Hub" would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



In Loving Memory of
**Irene Roberts-McGuire
(nee Bain)**
(Resident of Haliburton)

Peacefully at Highland Wood in Haliburton on Thursday morning, January 4, 2024 in her 97th year. Cherished daughter of the late Henry Duncan Bain and his wife Emily (nee Henderson). Beloved wife of the late Stanley Roberts and the late Murray McGuire. Loving mother of Maxine (Wim), Rod (Pam) and Cleve (Liane). Fondly remembered by her grandchildren Jocelyn (Kris), Krista (Jeff), Vanessa (Johnny), Logan (Meghan), Paige, Preston (Erin) and by her great grandchildren McGregor, Corson, Waverly, Charlotte, Tommy, Brinton and McKye. Predeceased by her sister Ruby (Gordon), her brothers Clarence (Ruth), Wilbert (Jean) and Leslie (Marjorie). Also lovingly remembered by her many nieces and nephews.

Visitation & Funeral Service

Friends and family are invited to call at the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario (705) 457-9209 on Monday evening, January 8, 2024 from 6-8 p.m. Then again on Tuesday morning, January 9, 2024 from 10 - 12 (Noon). A Funeral Service will follow in the Chapel. Interment later at Evergreen Cemetery, Haliburton. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton 4C's - Food Bank, Lakeside Church or West Guilford Baptist Church would be appreciated by the family.



In Loving Memory of
Robert S. Robinson
February 17, 1952 - January 7, 2023

This morning we as a family said goodbye to a loving husband and friend to Sharron of more than 49 years.

Father to Jason, Greg (Andrea) & Leigha. Grandpa to Adam, Emily, Olivia, Sakura, Keith. He will be greatly missed.... he fought a long hard losing battle, but still had his sense of humor even at the end... till we meet again my love.

A Celebration of Bob's Life will be held on June 1, 2024 with details to be announced.

Memorial Donations to the Hospital for Sick Children Foundation or the Toronto General Hospital would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.



HELP WANTED



**Township of Algonquin Highlands
Parks, Recreation and Trails Department**

We are currently accepting resumes for the following position:

Senior Trail Technician/By-Law Officer

Visit our website at: www.algonquinhighlands.ca for the complete job description.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit a cover letter and resume to:

**Dawn Mugford-Guay,
Human Resources Coordinator**
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Road
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Email: dmugfordguay@algonquinhighlands.ca



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LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

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4	1	6	9	8	3	2	7	5
8	9	2	6	7	5	3	1	4
7	3	5	4	2	1	6	8	9

HELP WANTED



Township of Algonquin Highlands
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The Township of Algonquin Highlands is seeking applications from qualified persons for the position of Building and Planning Assistant.

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Visit our website at: www.algonquinhighlands.ca for the complete job description.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit a cover letter and resume by
3:00 p.m. on Friday, January 19, 2024 to:

Dawn Mugford-Guay
Human Resources Coordinator
Township of Algonquin Highlands
1123 North Shore Road
Algonquin Highlands, ON K0M 1S0
Email: dmugfordguay@algonquinhighlands.ca

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Crosswordle

by Barbara Olson
© ClassiCanadian Crosswords

- Across**
- 1 ___-Romeo (Italian sportscar)
 - 5 Data-sending initials
 - 8 It's removed for a fill-up
 - 14 Openly revealed
 - 16 Godzilla foe with giant wings
 - 17 Don a corset?
 - 19 Emit a growled warning
 - 20 Mine finds
 - 21 Nothing-net link, in hoops lingo
 - 23 Witch's offering to Snow White?
 - 26 What a big spender is on
 - 28 Young-'___ (kids)
 - 29 Don't just say
 - 30 "Blue Ribbon" beer brand
 - 33 Stretchy dental obstruction
 - 36 Origin of the universe, according to some jewellers?
 - 40 Took a fast break?
 - 41 Like one to be tiptoed around
 - 42 Brand that pops up at breakfast
 - 43 "Helper" vb.
 - 44 Delay the progression of
 - 46 Football sack using just one digit?
 - 52 Ending for enzymes
 - 53 Actress Skye of "Wayne's World"
 - 54 Seniors brand touted as a cure for "tired blood"
 - 56 First choice among Bick's, Vlasic and Claussen?
 - 61 "Beauty School Dropout" movie
 - 62 Burns's assistant, or a northern B.C. town
 - 63 Is mum about
 - 64 Nightfall, poetically
 - 65 Uneaten bits
- Down**
- 1 Math subj. with unknowns
 - 2 Vietnam War site My ___
 - 3 Desirable spot on Google

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15					16					
17								18						
		19								20				
21	22			23					24	25				
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29						30	31	32				33	34	35
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46	47	48				49	50	51				52		
53						54					55			
56				57	58							59	60	
61							62							
63							64				65			

- 4 Bldg. annex
- 5 Spenser's "The ___ Queene"
- 6 Twitter taunter
- 7 Kind of code or colony
- 8 Some hockey booth VIPs
- 9 "You've Got Mail!" co.
- 10 Has a hunch, perhaps?
- 11 Smoke detector's low-battery sound
- 12 Pineda who replaced Journey's Steve Perry
- 13 So last year
- 15 Actress Lively, wife of Ryan Reynolds
- 18 Season for Montreal's "Juste pour rire"
- 21 Ritchie Valens hit "La ___"
- 22 First half of a workout mantra
- 24 Scrap yard hue
- 25 Bk. of collective works
- 27 Bruno Mars genre, in brief
- 30 Tame movie ratings
- 31 Spacebar neighbour
- 32 Queen ___ (pop powerhouse, to fans)
- 33 One doing lab legwork?
- 34 Mythical 100-eyed monster
- 35 Shortsighted one
- 37 ".... three men in ___"
- 38 At the front of the queue
- 39 Fair hiring policy inits.
- 43 Puny parasites
- 44 Enter unobtrusively
- 45 Song words before "ride" and "rain"
- 46 Triangle sounds
- 47 Beautiful woman of Paradise, in Islam
- 48 Not realized, as a dream
- 49 Make ___ of it (succeed)
- 50 Perfume ceremonially
- 51 Krispy ___ Doughnuts
- 55 ___ Rios (Jamaican resort)
- 57 This or that, in Spain
- 58 Stimpy's toon sidekick
- 59 Vancouver's SkyTrain syst., e.g.
- 60 Three before vee

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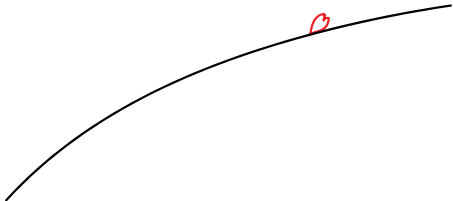
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It seems like nothing
but it is everything.

		7	4	2	5		9	
				9	3			6
3	2			6	1	4		
9	7		1					
4					8			
			9				3	
		2					8	
7			5			3		9
6					4	2		1



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