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Smiths Falls Record Journal



Town election heats up with more candidates

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Retired OPP officer Bill Dickson enters Smiths Falls council race

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Students with both the Upper Canada District School Board and the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario are scheduled to begin the 2026-27 school year on Wednesday, Sept. 2.

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Highway 7 impaired-driving complaint leads to charges

A Quebec man is facing charges after Lanark County OPP responded to a complaint about a possible impaired driver on Highway 7 near Carleton Place.

Police say officers received the traffic complaint on Friday, Aug. 7, and located the vehicle in the parking lot of a Carleton Place business shortly before 8 p.m.

The driver was arrested and taken to the OPP detachment in Carleton Place for testing.

Following the investigation, Charles Boucher, 45, of Duparquet, Que., was charged with failure or refusal to comply with a demand and having care or control of a motor vehicle with liquor readily available.

Police say Boucher was later released from custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Perth on Sept. 21.

His driver's licence was suspended for 90 days and the vehicle was impounded for seven days.

The charges have not been proven in court.

Paint the Summer art show returns to Westport Aug. 22-23

More than 40 artists will gather in Westport later this month as one of the region's major summer art shows returns for another year.

Paint the Summer 2026, presented by the Rideau Lakes Artists' Association, will take place Saturday, Aug. 22 and Sunday, Aug. 23 at the WTC Communications Centre, also known as the Westport Arena, at 37 Spring Street.

The show will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days, with free admission and parking.

Paint the Summer also continues its community support of the Westport Food Bank. While admission is free, visitors are encouraged to make a donation to the food bank during the event.

The annual show offers residents and visitors a chance to meet artists, discover new work and explore the variety of artistic talent found throughout the Rideau Lakes region.

Carleton Place Porchfest returns Aug. 22 with focus on young

Carleton Place will once again turn porches, yards and neighbourhood spaces into stages when Porchfest returns for its second year on Saturday, Aug. 22.

The free community event will run from 1 to 4 p.m. and will feature live performances at locations throughout town.

This year's Porchfest will place a particular emphasis on youth, giving young musicians an opportunity to perform in front of local audiences while also providing space for young entrepreneurs to showcase their businesses, products and creative work.

Porchfest-style events have become popular in communities across North America including Smiths Falls, with musicians performing from front porches and other small outdoor spaces as audiences walk or cycle between locations.

Retired OPP officer Bill Dickson enters Smiths Falls council race



COUNCIL CANDIDATE Bill Dickson is without election promises.

A familiar voice in eastern Ontario policing is seeking a new role in public service, with retired Ontario Provincial Police spokesperson Bill Dickson entering the race for Smiths Falls town council.

Dickson is officially listed among the town's six current candidates for councillor in the Oct. 26 municipal election. The field, which remains unofficial while nominations are still open, also includes Greg Hull, Chance Peterson, Jennifer Miller, Spring Loomes and Stephen Robinson.

Dickson has lived in Smiths Falls for more than 25 years with his wife, and the couple raised their two children in the community.

He retired March 31 after a 25-year career with the OPP, much of it spent as the East Region media relations coordinator. His career also included time leading media relations at OPP General Headquarters, where he worked on communications policy and provincial issues.

That experience, Dickson says, helped shape the approach he would bring to the council table.

"I have always believed in being as open and transparent as possible and listening to all sides of any situation," he said in announcing his candidacy.

Following his retirement from policing, Dickson became executive director of the Lanark Animal Welfare Society, where he now works with staff and volunteers caring for and finding homes for cats and dogs. His appointment to the organization was announced in May.

Dickson said running for municipal office has been something he has wanted to do as a way of giving back to the community.

"If elected, I want to ensure Smiths Falls continues to grow and thrive," he said.

But Dickson is deliberately avoiding sweeping campaign promises, saying municipal decisions require councillors to work collectively.

"I won't make big promises to 'change things', as I would be one voice around the table," he said. "It's up to council as a whole to ensure we listen to residents and work together to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead."

Dickson has already indicated he is prepared to discuss some of the larger issues facing the next council. In a recent media interview, he said the question of whether Smiths Falls should continue operating its own municipal police service or consider OPP policing is something that can be examined, while acknowledging his own background gives him a natural familiarity with the provincial force. He also emphasized that Smiths Falls currently receives strong service from its municipal police department.

Smiths Falls will use internet and telephone voting for the election. Voting day is Monday, Oct. 26.

Dickson said his campaign will focus heavily on hearing directly from residents rather than telling them what their priorities should be.

"I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible and hearing your vision," he said.

Town moves toward demolition of century-old water tower

Decision follows months of debates



One of the most recognizable features of the Smiths Falls skyline appears headed for demolition after councillors concluded that preserving the town's 102-year-old water tower would be difficult to justify financially.

Council had earlier considered spending between $5,000 and $15,000 on a preliminary engineering study to determine whether the decommissioned tower could be preserved as a heritage landmark. However, councillors ultimately decided not to proceed with the additional review, effectively clearing the way for demolition.

The tower has been out of service since Smiths Falls completed a new water tower, which was officially opened in December 2025 as part of the town's modernization of its drinking-water infrastructure.

Engineering inspections of the old structure in 2022 and 2024 identified advanced corrosion, metal loss around riveted connections and other structural deterioration. Town staff have estimated demolition at approximately $375,000, including possible lead-abatement work and removal of the tower's concrete foundations. The expense would be paid from water and wastewater reserves.

The decision follows months of debate over whether the structure could be retained as a landmark or tourism feature.

Public Works Director Paul McMunn previously advised council that municipal funds would be better directed toward active infrastructure rather than attempting to restore a structure that no longer serves the water system.

The tower has nevertheless remained closely associated with Smiths Falls. The Confederation Drive site beneath it has been used as public green space and has hosted the town's annual Celebration of Lights display.

While the tower's removal will change a familiar part of the local skyline, council's direction reflects the growing cost and safety concerns surrounding the century-old structure.

Smiths Falls election taking shape as nomination deadline approaches

The race to lead Smiths Falls is taking shape, with two candidates seeking the mayor's chair and six candidates registered for council as the Aug. 21 nomination deadline approaches.

As of Aug. 15, the town's unofficial candidate list shows Christopher Cummings and Nate Morris running for mayor, while Greg Hull, Chance Peterson, Jennifer Miller, Spring Loomes, Stephen Robinson and Bill Dickson have filed for the town's six councillor positions.

The lineup is not yet final. Candidates have until 2 p.m. Friday, Aug. 21 to file nomination papers, leaving time for additional names to enter both races before the list is certified.

The election will produce a new mayor regardless of the result.

Mayor Shawn Pankow announced earlier this month that he will not seek re-election, bringing to an end nearly 16 years in municipal politics. Pankow served four years as a councillor before being elected mayor, a position he has held for almost 12 years.

His departure creates the first open race for the mayor's chair in more than a decade.

Cummings brings previous municipal experience to the contest. A Smiths Falls resident for more than 30 years, he served three terms on town council from 2006 to 2018 before leaving municipal politics.

Recently retired from a career in business banking and financial advising, Cummings has said his campaign will emphasize responsible planning, support for local business, essential municipal services and maintaining quality of life as the community continues to grow.

Morris is campaigning on a platform that places considerable emphasis on municipal accountability and water issues.

He has identified drinking-water safety, reducing water bills, environmental remediation, removal of remaining lead pipes and changes to town hall operations among his priorities. He has also called for performance-based budgeting and a review of the municipality's senior administrative structure.

Contrasting platforms

The two candidates therefore offer voters contrasting approaches: Cummings emphasizing municipal and financial experience, while Morris is campaigning largely on changes to how the municipality operates.

The council race has also developed quickly.

The six candidates currently seeking the town's six council seats are Hull, Peterson, Miller, Loomes, Robinson and Dickson.

Miller and Robinson are members of the current council seeking another term. Other members of the existing council had not appeared on the town's unofficial candidate list as of Aug. 15.

That means Smiths Falls could see substantial turnover around the council table following the election.

Among the newcomers is Bill Dickson, well known across eastern Ontario from his career as an Ontario Provincial Police spokesperson. Dickson retired from the OPP earlier this year and became executive director of the Lanark Animal Welfare Society.

For now, attention is focused on Aug. 21. Once nominations close at 2 p.m., voters will know whether the two-way mayoral contest remains unchanged and how competitive the race for council will become.

Smiths Falls voters will elect one mayor and six councillors for the next four-year term.

Municipal election day is Monday, Oct. 26, 2026, with residents voting by internet or telephone.

Rideau Artist of the Year competition names winners – Page 11

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

ALTO ROUTE



Survey highlighting concerns about high-speed train project

Common Ground Research, an independent, non-partisan research organization has released the results of an online survey on the Alto high-speed rail proposal conducted between June 25 and July 18. The results showed public support for high speed rail, but not the Alto project as proposed.

Of the respondents, 82% stated they were strongly opposed to the current proposal, although 63% indicated strong support for more study of a high-speed rail route following the Highway 401 corridor. While Federal Transport Minister Steven MacKinnon recently announced that his government is strongly considering moving the project on a southward path that would include Kingston, the survey indicates a lukewarm response. Among the 1,080 survey respondents, 57% were strongly opposed to a Kingston station, 6% were somewhat opposed, 18% were neutral, 10% were somewhat supportive and only 8% strongly support it.

Opposition to the overall Alto project comes from concern about the project's potential cost, its impact on communities and the government transparency about the project.

Three quarters of respondents indicated that the high-speed rail project would play a major role in federal voting intentions. Opposition was strongest among Conservative voters, with 84% indicating strong opposition to the project.

Among Liberal voters, 51% were strongly opposed. About one-third of New Democratic voters and 46% of Green Party voters were strongly opposed.

Alto had originally proposed two possible routes: one is a straight line between Peterborough and Ottawa that would go through Lanark County. The second is a southern track that dips to within a half-hour's drive of downtown Kingston.

401 corridor favoured

While there has been considerable opposition from people living along both the proposed northern and southern corridors, the mayors of Kingston and the Township of South Frontenac have proposed a route that would see the rail line run further south, along the Highway 401 corridor, with a stop in Kingston.

2026 Fall Starter Company Plus intake is now open

Do you have a new business that you have started and is generating income? An existing business that has been registered for five years or less and you are looking to expand it? Or are you buying a small business? Is your business located in Smiths Falls or Lanark County? The Small Business Advisory Centre Smiths Falls/Lanark County is accepting applications for the Starter Company Plus Intake program until August 20. Participants will receive one-on-one guidance from an advisor, a step-by-step Business Plan Bootcamp, possible funding up to $5,000 and training and coaching to help better position you to be successful and profitable in business.

Spaces are limited, so not all applicants will be successful in this round. Applicants will be contacted whether they are a successful participant or not by August 26. The business bootcamp will start on Tuesday, September 22. The program is funded by the Ontario Government. The guidelines (PDF document) and the application (online Google Form) are available on the website https://smallbizcentre.ca/starter-company-plus. For more information, please email cjames@smallbizcentre.ca.

Use of GPS is off the charts: Would we be lost without them?

3-minutes with
Peter Black
Columnist



A few years ago, deciding to give new-fangled technology a go, we borrowed our neighbours GPS gizmo to drive a long, long stretch of highway that I could have driven in my sleep or with my hands tied behind my back, not that I have actually done either.

After endless kilometres of silence, Ms. GPS excitedly sparked to life, and in a tone reminiscent of one's sternest of grade school teachers, commanded us to "turn here, turn here." Had we obeyed the satellite's earthly robotic servant, we would have turned on to a gravel road to what would be accurately described as nowhere and quite possibly our doom and headlines in the Journal de Montréal.

Later that same year, in the depths of winter, a young doctor from Sherbrooke, similarly equipped with a GPS for a trip to New Brunswick, confidently followed the device's directions and ended up stranded in the snow on a logging road in the wilds of the Miramachi, 100 km off course. She survived for three days on a cooler of food her mother had packed before being happened upon by snowmobilers.

The moral of these aborted tragedies, according to GPS apologists, is, tut tut, you didn't read the manual. If you HAD, you'd have learned that you have to change the machine's settings to ignore unpaved roads. So, where's that manual again?

To be fair, your scribe recently successfully availed himself of the services of a cell phone GPS app to navigate a confusing network of connections heading for a destination in the remote reaches of Charlesbourg. Ignoring Ms. GPS's often comical phonetic interpretation of French street names – "turn left on Boulevard Reen Leave-ess-cue" – one must admit the thing has its advantages.

GPS has become an essential tool for ordinary folks and is now almost a standard feature for cars and trucks. It's a massive industry, with $155 billion US in global revenues projected for 2020, still growing strong despite the pandemic, and estimated to grow to $227 billion US by 2027.

Of course, the price of finding one's way efficiently is a disturbing invasion of privacy, just like anything associated with the internet. A tiny example of the pervasiveness of this fearful data collection is the cheery little records of your monthly travels Google Maps sends you. Look where you've been and where We have been following you!

With the invasion of GPS we are losing our cherished dependence on maps. We have a collection of maps in a box somewhere from places we've been over the years. Some places may have changed so much to have rendered the maps useless, but still they are fond souvenirs of cities we've visited and spent hours trying to figure out where we were and how to find our car.

The GPS, naturally, has driven map sales off a cliff. According to several reports the market for paper road maps has dropped by more than a half in the last decade, but appears to have stabilized. Canada's largest map publisher, with the distinctive yellow branding, is MapArt, based in Oshawa; in Quebec, it distributes maps under the JDMGeo brand.

The company has adapted to the GPS invasion by producing "GPS compatible maps" – whatever that means, plus a range of specialty maps like the one they created last year where fans of Ontario provincial parks can scratch off the ones they've visited to reveal a colourful map underneath.

The decline of roadmaps due to the domination of GPS is having another impact in line with the countless other nefarious effects of smartphones and digital technology. A McGill research study made international news a few years back. It observed that "young adults tended to use a spatial approach when navigating a virtual maze, while older adults used a response strategy."

It concluded that the constant use of GPS may lead to "atrophy of the hippocampus, a risk factor for cognitive problems in normal aging and in Alzheimer's disease."

It may also lead to more map-shunning young people, hooked on GPS, finding themselves directionless on a road to nowhere."

* * *

Severe weather warnings will be more precise

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) is making a major change to its severe weather warning system. Starting this month, ECCC forecasters will issue targeted severe thunderstorm and tornado warnings that are limited only to areas under the greatest threat from life-threatening hazards. A warning means that dangerous conditions are imminent or occurring. Until recently, warnings for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes were issued for geographic areas called zones. Some of these zones are very large compared to the relatively small size of a thunderstorm, often causing many communities to receive alerts not intended for them.

ECCC will now issue targeted warnings for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes by drawing shapes (polygons) on a map. These polygons identify only those communities most likely to be impacted by dangerous conditions. Canadians will see the most noticeable change through wireless emergency alerts, which are activated for both tornado warnings and severe thunderstorm warnings issued for extremely strong winds or very large hail. Wireless emergency alerts are sent to mobile devices connected to a cell phone tower within the warned area. Using the new system, only cell phone towers in and immediately around the polygon will send out a wireless emergency alert. Precise, geotargeted severe thunderstorm and tornado warnings will also apply to alerts pushed through The Weather Network's app and website, regardless of platform or operating system.

SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

TOWN PAGE

SMITHS FALLS

AUGUST 19, 2026

FIREWORKS RESCHEDULED

A reminder that the Canada Day fireworks display has been rescheduled for September 6. Stay tuned for further details!

2026 PROPERTY TAXES

Please be advised that the 2026 final tax bill is due on August 31. Payments can be made in person (cash, cheque, or debit), by mail, through the bank (online or in person), or on our e-commerce site (fees apply). For information on how you can pay your bill, please visit: ***smithsfalls.ca/taxes***.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2026

Nominations for the 2026 Municipal Election are now open! Nomination papers are now available to download online or can be picked up in person at Town Hall. Nominations will be accepted until August 21, and Election Day will take place on October 26. Thinking about getting involved? Running for Council is a great way to represent residents, share your voice, and help shape the future of our community. Learn more at ***smithsfalls.ca/election***. Have questions about the nomination process? Contact Kerry Costello at ***kcostello@smithsfalls.ca***.

Who is eligible to be a candidate in the Municipal Election?

To run for municipal office, a person must be nominated and meet the eligibility requirements. A qualified candidate must be:

- A Canadian citizen
- At least 18 years of age
- A resident of Smiths Falls, or an owner or tenant of land in Smiths Falls, or the spouse of an owner or tenant of land in Smiths Falls

To learn more, please visit: ***smithsfalls.ca/election***.

Register to Vote!

Make sure you're on the voters list so you receive important election information and can vote quickly and easily on election day.

✔ Confirm you're registered
✔ Update your address or information
✔ Add yourself to the voters list

Check your registration today: ***www.RegisterToVoteON.ca***.

MEMORIAL COMMUNITY CENTRE OPENS FOR 2026-2027 SEASON

The Memorial Community Centre is officially open for the 2026-2027 season, and public skating is already in full swing! View the public skating schedule at ***smithsfalls.ca/recreation*** and stay tuned for even more recreation programs and activities coming soon.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

August 24, 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting 5 PM
September 7, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council 5 PM
Attend in person at Town Hall (77 Beckwith Street North) or view live streamed proceedings on:
Facebook - facebook.com/townofsmithsfalls
YouTube - Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
For Council, Committee and Board meeting agendas, visit: smithsfalls.ca/meeting

2026 ROAD CONSTRUCTION

Road construction is underway throughout Smiths Falls this season. To learn more about the Town's 2026 road construction projects, visit: ***smithsfalls.ca/townprojects***. Thank you for your patience, and please slow down, follow all posted signage, and drive safely through construction zones.

HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE REMINDER

The Hazardous Waste Site will close for the season on September 5. Hours of operation are from 8 AM to noon on Saturdays only. This is a free service for Smiths Falls residents and requires proof of residency. For a list of acceptable materials, please visit: ***smithsfalls.ca/HHW***.

RECYCLING REMINDER

Clear blue bags cannot be processed at the recycling facility and should not be used for recyclable materials. Shredded paper may be placed in a clear or opaque bag and set out for fiber recycling. All other recyclables should be placed in your recycling bin. If additional capacity is required, a tote, basket, or sturdy cardboard box may be used. Following these guidelines helps ensure recyclable materials are properly processed and diverted from landfill. Thank you for doing your part to support an effective recycling program.

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144416

More than 41,000 students prepare to head back to class across eastern Ontario



School buses will soon be back on the roads and classrooms will once again be filled as more than 41,000 students attending the region's two largest school boards prepare to return to class.

Students with both the Upper Canada District School Board and the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario are scheduled to begin the 2026-27 school year on Wednesday, Sept. 2.

For the UCDSB, Tuesday, Sept. 1 is a professional activity day for staff, with students arriving the following morning. The board's Ministry of Education-approved calendar lists Sept. 2 as the first day of classes.

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario is following the same schedule. Its calendar also has a PA day on Sept. 1, followed by the first day of school for students on Wednesday, Sept. 2.

41,000 students

Together, the two boards serve an estimated 41,500 students across a broad section of eastern Ontario.

The Upper Canada District School Board says it operates 77 schools and has approximately 27,900 students, supported by about 4,200 employees. Its territory stretches through Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, and Prescott and Russell.

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario currently reports approximately 13,600 students. Its demographic information lists 39 elementary schools and 10 secondary schools across eight counties, covering more than 12,000 square kilometres.

Those figures mean approximately 41,500 students could be returning to schools operated by the two boards, although actual September enrolment can fluctuate as families move and new registrations are processed.

Both boards are still accepting registrations for the new school year.

The UCDSB says families can register students online and notes that children who will be four years old by Dec. 31, 2026 are eligible to begin Kindergarten this fall.

The CDSBEO is also accepting registrations and is encouraging families to register as early as possible so the board can determine staffing requirements and ensure classroom space is available.

The return to school will also mean a major change on local roads after the quieter summer months.

Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario, which provides transportation services for the two boards, has announced that transportation eligibility and service changes will take effect for both elementary and secondary students for the 2026-27 school year. Families who depend on school buses are being encouraged to confirm their transportation arrangements before classes begin.

Bus stop reminder

STEO reminds students to arrive at their bus stop at least five minutes before the scheduled pick-up, wait away from the roadway and remain outside the danger zone surrounding a school bus.

For motorists, the first days of September will bring the return of school buses, children walking and cycling to school and increased traffic around school zones.

The 2026-27 calendars for both boards include a Christmas break running from Dec. 21 through Jan. 1 and March Break from March 15 to 19, 2027.

With the first day of classes now less than three weeks away, families across Lanark County and the rest of eastern Ontario are entering the final stretch of summer before roughly 41,500 public and Catholic students head back to school Sept. 2.

HISTORY

Pioneeer floating bridges connected communities

BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON

In a region boasting hundreds of lakes, rivers, and waterways, Lanark County is a bustling tourist hub attracting visitors from across Canada, the United States and beyond. With modern transportation systems providing easy connections it is difficult to imagine the enormous struggles faced by the pioneers when these same bodies of water were perceived as daunting obstacles in their daily lives.

In those earliest times small crude rafts transported people and goods and in later years larger floating bridges were built, becoming a vital means for small communities facing long detours on rough roadways. The first floating bridges in the county were constructed from cedar planks chained together providing passage for pedestrians, but could not accommodate the weight of oxen, horses, or wagons.

Perhaps the most storied of these old floating bridges was built on the 12th Concession of Lanark, at the narrows between Clayton and Taylor Lakes. In 1858 dozens of Lanark Township residents petitioned their council requesting a bridge to provide a shorter route to St. Patrick's Church in Ferguson's Falls, to the train station in Almonte, and to Perth for supplies. James Sullivan was awarded the contract, building the bridge using long timbers on each side, with planks across, held together by thick pegs. After almost twenty years of use, by 1877, the structure began to deteriorate, and the Sullivan family once again won the contract to construct a new bridge. The second bridge was more substantial, built with heavy cedar timbers forming the base, with a railing two logs high, built wider than the original. After completion, the bridge was used for transportation of pedestrians, horses and oxen with carts, and all types of carriages.

In the decades that followed, countless horses, wagons, farm machines, funeral processions, pedestrians, cattle, hogs and sheep were driven over this convenient shortcut. As the era of the automobile evolved, cars and trucks used the bridge, and for the Clayton postman it became a time-saving segment of his regular mail route. Not without issues, being a flexible structure, the floating bridge shifted and sank lower under the weight of vehicles and occasionally water squirted up through the planks.

After many years of use, in 1943 the bridge slipped off its supporting timbers and was closed to traffic, although pedestrian use continued, and it remained popular for local fishermen. In the summer months recreational boaters can still see the timbers on the lake bottom, and in winter months, it is still in use as an ice bridge. These incredible floating bridges were a practical solution to the transportation challenges faced by our pioneer settlers, and remain a fascinating element in our local history.

* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

* * *

According to OPP annual report

Violent crime rose 12 % in Lanark County; while property crime fell sharply in 2025

Violent crime increased significantly across the Lanark County OPP detachment area last year, even as property crime, injury collisions and the overall number of serious crashes declined.

The most significant change was in violent crime.

Lanark County OPP recorded 652 violent-crime offences in 2025, up from 582 in 2024 — an increase of about 12 per cent. There were 487 such offences in 2023, meaning the total has climbed about 34 per cent in two years.

Assault and firearm-related offences accounted for the largest share, rising from 318 in 2024 to 331 last year. Sexual offences increased slightly from 79 to 82.

Other offences involving violence or threats of violence jumped more sharply, from 169 to 209, while offences involving deprivation of freedom more than doubled from 10 to 22. Robberies increased from five to eight.

There were no homicides recorded by the detachment in 2025, compared with one in each of the previous two years.

The report highlights another concerning trend: intimate-partner-violence calls for service increased 48 per cent from 2024.

OPP officials say population growth is among several factors contributing to the increase. In response, the detachment has assigned a specialized abuse-issues investigator to review crimes against persons and has increased officer training for intimate-partner-violence investigations.

Police have also strengthened referrals to Victim Services and Lanark County Interval House's Victim Advocate program.

The violent-crime numbers contrast sharply with the trend in property offences.

Police recorded 1,044 property crimes in 2025, down from 1,206 in 2024 and 1,440 in 2023. That amounts to a 13-per-cent decline in one year and a reduction of more than 27 per cent over two years.

Theft under $5,000 declined from 424 cases to 354, while reported fraud dropped from 368 to 296. Mischief cases fell from 219 to 181.

Not every category declined. Break-and-enters edged upward from 80 to 83, while theft over $5,000 increased from 100 to 111.



Police say the Community Street Crime Unit continued targeting serial thieves and people suspected of break-and-enters. Officers also substantially increased their visibility throughout the county.

The report says patrol hours increased by 35 per cent, while roadway enforcement rose seven per cent. Total frontline hours climbed from 143,686 in 2024 to 149,785 in 2025, compared with 138,980 in 2023.

Police handled 27,793 computer-aided dispatch events during 2025. Of those, 8,469 were categorized as requiring an immediate police response because of circumstances potentially involving extreme danger, injury, death or a crime in progress. The annual report does not provide comparable 2024 figures in that table.

Road safety

Fewer collisions, but speed becomes bigger concern. The road-safety statistics offer a mixed picture.

The detachment recorded six fatal-injury collisions in 2025, down from nine a year earlier. Non-fatal injury collisions dropped from 130 to 108, while property-damage-only collisions declined from 987 to 921.

Seven people were killed in collisions during the year, compared with nine in 2024, while the number injured fell substantially from 208 to 155.

But speed-related crashes moved sharply in the opposite direction.

There were 119 speed-related collisions in 2025, compared with 73 in 2024 — an increase of about 63 per cent. Inattentive-driving-related collisions increased from 101 to 109.

Alcohol-related collisions declined slightly, from 38 to 35, although alcohol or drugs were identified as a causal factor in four fatal roadway collisions in 2025. There had been none recorded in that category in either 2023 or 2024.

Enforcement statistics show police laid 130 impaired-driving charges under the report's "Big 4" road-safety category, up from 119 in 2024. Distracted-driving charges increased from 20 to 31, while speeding charges remained relatively steady at 2,448, compared with 2,463 the year before. Seatbelt charges fell from 70 to 61.

Overall Highway Traffic Act charges rose from 3,563 in 2024 to 3,774 in 2025. Criminal Code non-traffic charges showed an even larger increase, from 1,711 to 2,400.

Illegal drugs

Another notable finding was the absence of fatal opioid overdoses reported by the detachment in 2025. OPP said it continues to work with its Community Street Crime Unit and other policing partners to target illicit drug trafficking.

The annual report represents the first full-year review since the new Lanark County OPP Detachment Board began operating in April 2025. The board brings together representatives from Beckwith, Carleton Place, Drummond/North Elmsley, Lanark Highlands, Mississippi Mills, Montague, Perth and Tay Valley.

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LANARK COUNTY

LANARK COUNTY COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2027 FUNDING

Are you part of a non-profit agency or organization that provides programs or services in Lanark County that support or improve the well-being and quality of life in the community?

You may be eligible for a Lanark County Community Grant! Applications open on July 20, 2026 for 2027 funding.

Program details can be found online at www.lanarkcounty.ca

The deadline to apply is **September 18, 2026**.

Completed applications and/or questions may be addressed to:

Lanark County Clerk's Office
c/o Megan Beson, Deputy Clerk
99 Christie Lake Road, Perth, ON K7H 3C6
Phone: 613-267-4200 ext. 1102
Email: mbeson@lanarkcounty.ca

144332

Seattle Mariners front office executive's ties to Smiths Falls

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

In 1992, lead singer Gord Downie of The Tragically Hip recounted the story of Toronto Maple Leaf defenseman Bill Barilko, who died in a plane crash in August 1951, in the song Fifty Mission Cap.

"I stole this from a hockey card," Downey confesses, explaining how he happened upon Barilko's tragic tale.

'Stealing' from a player bio on the reverse side of a 1999 Bowman's baseball card – specifically #196 in that year's Chrome Refractor set – of then-New York Mets outfield prospect Scott Hunter reveals that his "grandfather (Fred) was a professional hockey player."

A deeper dive into that bit of trivia shows that Fred "Ted" Hunter was born and raised in Smiths Falls, where for a while, he worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

He was also a goaltender on a number of local amateur hockey teams before joining the Atlantic City (N.J.) Sea Gulls of the Eastern Amateur Hockey League (EAHL) – considered a professional circuit by today's standards – for the 1931/'32 season, winning the National Amateur Athletic Union championship that year.

With Atlantic City, the talented and popular Hunter developed a fearless reputation on the ice, something which his grandson recalled in an email to the Record-Journal.

"He loved talking about the fighting stories… how guys would take runs at him, and he would get up, 'drop' one guy and then go after the next," Scott Hunter, a 50-year-old Philadelphia, Pa. native who is currently vice-president of amateur scouting for the Seattle Mariners, recalled amusingly.

After five seasons with the Gulls, "Ted" Hunter retired in September 1936, married Doris Wootton – an area girl to whom he'd become engaged earlier in the year – and moved to Smiths Falls, where he owned a retail hardware store.

Hunter continued to play for local hockey teams, but after a few years – and with their young son, Fred Jr. in tow – the couple moved to Philadelphia, where his brother-in-law ran a real estate management company with which "Ted" later became a partner.

He died in 1986 at the age of 77.

Scott told the Record-Journal that he has fond memories of spending time with his grandfather, including sleepovers with his brother, Jordan, at their grandparents' home, and going to Philadelphia Flyers games – "Ted" had season tickets at the Spectrum in Philadelphia – "all the time."

As a high schooler, Scott was taken in the fifth round of the June 1993 Major League Baseball draft by the Los Angeles Dodgers, spending nine seasons as a minor league outfielder in the Dodgers, Mets, Montreal Expos, Cleveland Indians and Baltimore Orioles organizations.

And during that time, he had an opportunity to connect with his Eastern Ontario roots.

"When I got picked up by the Expos/Ottawa Lynx (Montreal's top farm team, in June 1999), my parents came to visit me (in Ottawa), and we went to Smiths Falls to visit my grandfather's one remaining brother, Uncle Alec, who… never left Smiths Falls," he said, adding that his grandfather, and the town, are never far from his heart.

Cade is presently a catcher/outfielder in the Cincinnati Reds' system, while Grant is currently enrolled at Binghamton (Vestal, N.Y.) University where he also plays the outfield for the varsity Bearcats.

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When you are at our newsstand consider picking up a copy of the newspaper for others who are less mobile. Or, take several for the neighbourhood to save them a trip. Our goal is to deliver the community news to everyone and you can help.



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144900

Rideau Artist of the Year competition names winners

Two regional artists have tied for top honours in the 2026 Rideau Artist of the Year Competition after nearly 20 artists took to the streets and waterfront of Smiths Falls to create original works during the town's Big Art Walk.

The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum announced that Carleton Place artist Heidi Sinnett and Westport artist Lorraine Gravelle will share the 2026 Rideau Artist of the Year title.

Artists were given up to 12 hours during the July 25 Big Art Walk to complete an original work in the en plein air tradition, using downtown Smiths Falls and the Rideau waterway as inspiration.

A three-member jury independently scored each work for impact, composition, style and technique, and completion, with a maximum combined score of 60 points.

Sinnett earned top marks for her ink and watercolour work Inkformation, depicting the Smiths Falls Public Library.

"I'm a Librarian so having a chance to draw a Carnegie Library was amazing!" Sinnett wrote in her artist statement. One juror described her attention to detail as "impeccable."

Gravelle shared the title for her acrylic painting Lest We Forget, a tribute to her cousin, decorated Canadian soldier Jean-Charles "Chuck" Beaulne, as well as other members of the military.

Gravelle said the sunrise in the painting symbolizes "our continued hope for a brighter future." She was also the winner of the 2025 Rideau Artist of the Year competition.

Makenna Cleaver took second place for her watercolour Mother's Morning, inspired by her mother and the community. A juror described the piece as a "bold illustrative work." Cleaver previously won the competition's 2024 Youth Award.

An honourable mention went to Ottawa artist Ryan Hill for Streetside, an acrylic and oil work. A juror praised the dimensions of the piece for emphasizing the street scene and said its restrained use of colour gave the work "a definite nod to the past."

The competition entries are now part of the Rideau Artist of the Year Exhibition at the Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum, 11 Old Slys Rd.

The exhibition is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and will remain on display until Oct. 4.

Visitors are also invited to vote for the People's Choice Award. The winning artist will receive $100 in Downtown Smiths Falls Dollars and free entry into the 2027 Rideau Artist of the Year competition.

You can reach Smiths Falls with your newspaper

If you have a message for the residents of Smiths Falls and adjacent townships the most effective way to reach them is an advertisement in this weekly newspaper. For information call today at 613-299-6672. Or reach us by email at: smithsfalls.journal@gmail.com

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Festival of the Wild Child returns to High Lonesome Nature Reserve

Families are being invited to get outdoors and explore nature when the Festival of the Wild Child returns to High Lonesome Nature Reserve on Saturday, Aug. 22.

Organized by the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust, the annual festival has been introducing children to the natural world for 12 years. About 150 participants and 70 volunteers typically take part in the day of hands-on activities and outdoor discovery.

This year's festival encourages visitors to take small steps toward understanding the landscape around them, whether by examining tiny creatures living in a pond, identifying pollinators, following signs left by wildlife or simply taking a closer look at the patterns on leaves and tree bark.

Returning activities include Pond Life, Pollinator Path and Who Pooped? Families can also explore a fairy trail, make leaf and bark rubbings, practise navigation skills through Map It Out!, visit a research tent to learn about ongoing scientific studies and try nature journaling.

The festival will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at High Lonesome Nature Reserve, 867 Carbine Road in Pakenham.

Admission is free for children under 16 and $10 for adults. Registration details and additional information are available through the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust at mmlt.ca/events.

OPP reminds public of seatbelt rules



The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) wants to remind everyone that all drivers and passengers in a moving vehicle are required to wear a seatbelt and that drivers are responsible for ensuring that all passengers under the age of 16 are wearing one. Passengers who are 16 or older are responsible for putting on their own seatbelt and can be issued a fine for not wearing one.

Children who are younger than eight, weigh less than 36 kg (79 lbs) or are shorter than 145 cm (4'9") must be secured in a child car seat or booster seat. An OPP officer recently stopped a vehicle after it nearly collided with his police cruiser on Campeau Drive.

The officer immediately observed an infant in a bassinet, on the front passenger seat, who was not belted in. Earlier in the day, the same officer observed a four-year-old child walking around the backseat of another

Webinar on our tap water

About challenges

Did you know…80% of Ontarians are provided with clean and safe drinking water from municipal drinking water systems? You can learn about the history of source water protection in the province and more with an upcoming webinar.

The Quinte Conservation Foundation will continue its series of rural drinking water-wise webinars with "The State of Drinking Water in Ontario" on Thursday September 3 at 12 p.m. noon.

The conference will be given by Venkat Ramani, Senior Operational Instructor from the Walkerton Clean Water Centre.

Registration is free. This conference is virtual and will be available on Zoom.

Reserve your spot online at 2026 DWW Webinar: The State of Drinking Water in Ontario should answer the questions of many from an expert in the field.

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Studio Theatre Perth presents 'Having Hope at Home'

Studio Theatre Perth continues its 2026 live theatre season with "Having Hope At Home", written by David S. Craig, a local Canadian playwright, and directed by Grace Main.

Set in a farmhouse in Lanark County near Perth, the play brings a local story to life. Filled with laughter, heart, and recognizable moments, this warm and uplifting comedy celebrates the resilience, humour, and neighbourly spirit that remind us both community and hope can often be found right next door. It is a side-splitting look at a family learning to love again. this hilarious, heartwarming story of forgiveness and hope.

Craig is an award-winning, internationally produced, playwright and lyricist. He has written over thirty dramatic works. He has received numerous top honours for his extensive body of work, including three Dora Mavor Moore Awards, three Chalmers New Play Awards, and Toronto's Barbara Hamilton Award for artistic excellence.

The theatre will present evening performances at 7:30 p.m. on September 17, 18, 24 and 25, and matinees at 2 p.m. on September 19, 20, 26 and 27.

New seed drill helps expand monarch habitat in Lanark County

A new piece of specialized equipment unveiled at the Lanark County Administration Building is expected to make it easier and less expensive for municipalities and conservation groups to establish native wildflower meadows for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

The Canadian Wildlife Federation unveiled its new native seed drill on Aug. 8, marking the launch of a community restoration equipment library supported by a $54,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation Capital Grant.

The Truax native seed drill, nicknamed "Polly Planter," is designed specifically for planting native seeds, which can be more difficult to establish using conventional agricultural equipment.

The drill places seed at the appropriate depth and provides suitable soil coverage, helping improve germination and increasing the likelihood that meadow restoration projects will succeed.



As part of the new equipment library, the seed drill will be made available at no cost to municipalities, conservation organizations and other partners carrying out native meadow restoration projects.

Access to the equipment could remove a significant obstacle for smaller organizations because specialized native-seed drills can be too expensive to purchase for occasional restoration work.

Lanark County has worked with the Canadian Wildlife Federation on monarch conservation since 2019, when the two organizations partnered on a pilot project aimed at improving roadside habitat for the threatened butterfly.

That work has focused on increasing the availability of milkweed and nectar-producing native wildflowers. Milkweed is particularly important because monarch butterflies lay their eggs on the plant and monarch caterpillars depend on it as their sole food source.

Native flowering plants are also critical to adult monarchs, providing nectar as the butterflies make their remarkable migration south to wintering grounds in central Mexico.

The partnership has since expanded beyond the original pilot project as the county continues efforts to restore and protect pollinator habitat.

The new seed drill is intended to help accelerate that work by allowing more organizations to convert appropriate lands into native meadows without having to invest in their own specialized machinery.

The equipment also received a distinctly local identity.

Eleven-year-old Lily Jellositz won a community naming contest with "Polly Planter," a name combining the equipment's planting role with a reference to the pollinators it is intended to help.

Following the Aug. 8 unveiling, participants took part in a hands-on monarch conservation activity, learning how to identify milkweed plants, monarch eggs and caterpillars.

Eastern Ontario PC caucus voices Alto high speed project concerns

BY PHILLIP BLANCHER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

After months of seemingly being supportive of the federal government's ALTO High Speed Rail project, provincial Progressive Conservative MPPs are now speaking about concerns with the project.

A statement was sent out on behalf of 11 PC MPPs about there being too many unanswered questions about the project.

The group said that investments are needed to strengthen the province's economy and create jobs reflecting rural community priorities.

"Public confidence in major infrastructure projects depends on meaningful consultation. In the case of ALTO, too many questions remain unanswered. Too many voices have been ignored," the statement said. "If ALTO is to proceed, local voices impacted by this project deserve to see their feedback reflected in the project's planning, route selection and delivery."

The release went on to say that the federal government must ensure any rail project minimizes the impact to farmland is supported by people affected by the project.

"We will continue to stand with our municipalities, farmers, landowners, and residents."

The statement was sent out on behalf of MPPs Nolan Quinn (Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry), Steve Clark (Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes), John Jordan (Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston), Tyler Allsopp (Bay of Quinte), George Darouze (Carleton), Billy Denault (Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke), David Piccini (Northumberland-Peterborough South), Laurie Scott (Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock), Stephane Sarrazin (Glengarry-Prescott–Russell), Ric Bresee (Hastings and Addington), and Dave Smith (Peterborough-Kawartha). This is the first time in nearly a year and a half since the Alto project was announced in February 2025 that area government MPPs have voiced concerns.

Land owners, advocacy groups, and municipal councils have been speaking out since the route of the project was announced – all opposing Alto.

This summer, SDG Counties barred Alto officials from entering SDG-owned forests and lands on the Ottawa-Montréal route across the top of the counties. Lower-tier municipalities within SDG also have supported blocking access when appropriate with South Dundas mayor Jason Broad cautioning at a recent council meeting not to trust federal government promises of benefits of a project – citing unfulfilled promises from the St. Lawrence-Seaway project in the 1950s.

The timing of the statement from the 11 PC MPPs was less than a week after the federal government blocked the $5 billion proposal by the Ontario government to expand Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport – citing widespread community backlash. Transport Canada said that nearly 87 per cent of the 87,000 public consultation respondents opposed the Billy Bishop Airport expansion.

Responding to the Eastern Ontario PC Caucus Statement on Alto consultation, The Leader asked MPP and Minister of Colleges and Universities Nolan Quinn's office about the timing of the statement and if the federal government reversed its decision on the airport expansion – would the Eastern Ontario Caucus opposition to Alto disappear? Quinn's office was also asked why MPPs are only voicing constituents' concerns now, nearly a year and a half after the project announcement?

Lastly, Quinn's office was asked if the province has entered into any Non-Disclosure Agreements with Alto regarding surveying and planning on provincially-owned land on the Alto routes in Ontario? The City of Ottawa council was criticized in the spring for signing an NDA with Alto before details of the route in that city could be discussed.

Officials with Quinn's office did not respond to The Leader's questions by the publication deadline.

Is lettuce safe to eat?

A question being asked by many

A recent outbreak of cyclosporiasis, a parasitic infection which is spread via contaminated food and water and causes debilitating explosive diarrhea, has so far sickened at least 22,000 Americans.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration traced the largest cluster of cases to iceberg lettuce grown by Taylor Farms in central Mexico. So far, the only Canadians who have gotten sick have traveled to Mexico or the U.S. Although the recalled lettuce products associated with the outbreak are no longer on shelves or in restaurant kitchens, public trust has been damaged to the point that consumers are avoiding all lettuce.

Dr. Sharon Nachman, an infectious disease specialist, say it is a good idea to take some precautions. She recommends washing produce in a water-vinegar solution, which will shake any cyclospora off and then giving it a good rinse afterwards.

She adds that you can reduce your risk by sourcing lettuce from your local farmers' market or by choosing other fresh produce to get your fruit and vegetables fix. She says anything that has a good, strong rind on it that's smooth, like tomatoes, cucumbers, bananas, and apples, are those you can safely rinse off the outside of and eat.

If you want complete peace of mind, eat only cooked produce, since cooking destroys the parasite.



How to clean produce to avoid a serious illness

Before you cook with any fresh produce, there is a non-negotiable first step: wash all of your fruits and vegetables. Always wash your produce, even if you're cooking it.

Experts recommend putting produce in a bowl with a few teaspoons of vinegar: diluted vinegar can help wash away bacteria on the surface of your produce. Water and a splash of white vinegar will do the job well, but you can use a salad spinner for leafy greens or a cleaning brush for root vegetables to get rid of stubborn dirt. Before handling any food, be sure to wash your own hands: you don't want to do all of the work of cleaning your produce and then cause cross contamination.

Make sure you clean your fruits and vegetables before cutting into them; chopping up dirty produce carries the grime from the knife through the inside of the produce, making it much harder to clean. Don't reuse unsanitary tools, like cutting boards, before washing them. Wash your produce before storing them with other foods in your refrigerator to avoid cross contamination.

Strengthen your heart through resistance training

Experts say that people who have heart conditions and want to improve their overall heart health should strength train two times a week.

Resistance training, also known as strength training, is a safe and effective way to improve cardiovascular health in people with and without heart disease, according to the American Heart Association (AHA). It can reduce resting blood pressure, cholesterol levels and body fat. Resistance training can include dumbbells body weight exercises like push-ups or squats, machine weights or resistance bands.

Anytime a person builds muscle, it boosts their overall health and longevity. Anytime you strength train, you work your heart. It's not as much as you would as if you were running or cycling, but your heart rate does increase.

Adults who strength train have a 17% lower risk of cardiovascular disease compared with those who skip this form of exercise. Studies show that an exercise routine that includes both resistance training and cardio comes with the most heart benefits.

To achieve muscular and cardiovascular benefits, the AHS recommends that healthy adults do eight to 10 different exercises that target major muscle groups, doing eight to 12 repetitions for each exercise and repeating those sets up to three times. People with heart conditions can use lighter weights and do more repetitions to minimize risk while still providing health benefits. Of course, you should still consult your doctor before starting any exercise program.

Downtown Music Festival returns to town on Sept. 12

Downtown Smiths Falls will come alive with music on Saturday, Sept. 12, when the Downtown Music Festival returns with a full day of free performances followed by a ticketed evening concert headlined by Canadian rock band The Trews.

Hosted by the Downtown Smiths Falls Business Association (DSFBA), the festival will showcase local, regional and Canadian performers at two downtown stages.

The festivities begin at 1 p.m. with free live performances along Russell Street East. The afternoon lineup includes Landon Bedor, DaNielle Hewitt, Spencer Scharf and Ambre McLean.

Organizers say the free portion of the festival is intended to bring residents and visitors downtown to enjoy live entertainment while also taking advantage of local shops, restaurants and other businesses.

"Downtown Smiths Falls has always had an incredible live music scene that is an important part of the fabric of our downtown and really showcases what we have to offer," said DSFBA chair Sheri Axford. "We're excited to continue building on that in 2026."

Attention will shift to a second stage on Main Street West later in the day, where doors open at 4 p.m. for a ticketed 19-plus concert.

Local acts One Eyed Dawgs and Vicki Brittle will open the evening before The Trews take the stage as the festival's headline performers.



CANADIAN rock band The Trews.will healine by the Downtown Smiths Falls Music Festival.

The Trews have been a fixture of Canadian rock for more than two decades, building a catalogue that includes numerous hit singles and several Gold and Platinum-certified releases.

The band — Colin MacDonald, John-Angus MacDonald, Jack Syperek, Theodore McKibon and Jeff Heisholt — has recorded 20 Top 10 Canadian rock radio singles, including three that reached No. 1.

The Trews have also received multiple East Coast Music Awards and JUNO Award nominations and have performed around the world.

Over their career, they have shared stages with some of rock music's biggest names, including the Rolling Stones, KISS, Robert Plant, Guns N' Roses, Aerosmith, Bruce Springsteen, Weezer and Mumford & Sons.

The combination of free afternoon entertainment and a major evening concert is designed to make the Downtown Music Festival both a community celebration and a destination event for music fans throughout the region.

Tickets for the evening headliner show are on sale at select Smiths Falls locations and through downtownsf.ca.

Organizers are encouraging fans to purchase tickets early because capacity at the Main Street West stage is limited.

Museum offers whisky tour which will include a tot or two

The Perth Museum is introducing The Whisky Walk: Perth's Distilling Legacy, a guided walking tour through downtown Perth that explores the people, places, and stories behind one of Canada's most important whisky-producing communities which once was a major historic distilling hub fueled by its Scottish settlers, and pure Tay River water.

Along the way, you'll visit the sites of Perth's historic distilleries, discover the local stories of Rever- and William Bell and the Spaulding & Stewart and McLaren distilleries, explore how whisky helped shape the town we know today and finish with a whisky tasting and artisanal pairings at Top Shelf Distillers.

Book your tour at https://topshelfdistillers.com/pages/events-tours... and discover why Perth's distilling story is one worth raising a glass to.

IN MEMORIAM



IRVIN

Francis Anthony (Tony)

*IN LOVING MEMORY OF **TONY IRVIN**, who was called Home August 22, 2025*

God called your name so softly,
That only you could hear
And no one heard the footsteps,
of angels drawing near.
The golden gates stood open,
God saw you needed rest
His garden must be beautiful,
He only takes the best.

Forever loved, Joyce



Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of memoriam in this newspaper.
Or, you can call us directly at 514-503-1593.
Memoriams are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.

OBITUARIES

HENDERSON

Kenneth

JUNE 24, 1933 – JULY 26, 2026



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Ken Henderson at the age of 93.

Ken was the last of three children born in Toronto to the late Angus and Alice Henderson (née Sudlow). In 1955, Ken married Thelma "Sal" Henderson (née Bunker) and together they created over 70 years of memories. He worked as a Vehicle Inspection Officer for the Ministry of Transport at the weigh scales in Glen Tay. Ken was known for his fairness, compassion, and support of not only his family, but the community as well. He was both proud and thrilled when the 1979 Midget ball team, that he coached, was inducted into the Perth and District Sports Hall of Fame in May 2019. During his retirement, Ken became an accomplished woodworker as he honed in on his skillset as a proficient carver leaving a legacy of intricately detailed works of art. Ken was always quick with a joke or to help out a neighbour; traits he will be remembered for years to come.

Ken will be greatly missed by his wife, Sal; children Linda (Denis), Douglas (Lisa), along with his late son Tim's wife, Rebecca; grandchildren, Danielle (Jeff), Nolan (Kelly), Travis (Nicole), Alisa, Megan (Levi), Blake, and Jackson; two beautiful great-granddaughters, Nora and Quinn, who held a special place in his heart; as well as numerous extended family members. We know that he is enjoying a much-anticipated reunion with his son Tim, parents and brothers, Bob and Dave.

The family want to thank the numerous doctors, nurses and workers who gave the best care and attention to Ken during his hospital stay and provided support for his family.

In memory of Ken, memorial contributions in his honour to a charity of your choice or to support local sports teams in your community would be appreciated by his family.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com

NEWMAN

Marie Elisabeth Lynne

FEBRUARY 20, 1940 – AUGUST 14, 2026



It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Marie Elisabeth Lynne Newman, on August 14, 2026, in Perth, Ontario, at the age of 86. Lynne was born on February 20, 1940, in northern Quebec.

Lynne will be lovingly remembered by her sister Suzanne, her brother Emile, her sister-in-law Anne Marie, her sons Ron (Lisa), Stephen, David (Kelly), and Roger (Harlan), and her daughter Kim. She will be deeply missed by her nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren, whom she cherished dearly, as well as her many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. She leaves behind a special lifelong friendship with Ann McCrae (Michael) of Toronto.

Lynne was predeceased by her beloved husband, Leo Geroux of Carleton Place; her daughter Julie of Stittsville; and her grandson Justin of Carleton Place. She was also predeceased by her parents, Romeo and Bernadette; her brother Jacques; her brother-in-law Doug and sister-in-law Raymonde.

Lynne touched countless lives throughout her 86 years. She dedicated 35 years to teaching elementary school, sharing her love of learning with generations of children. She was also a talented pianist, a gifted seamstress, a leader in her church, and, according to those fortunate enough to taste them, the best pie-maker in the world. Above all, Lynne was a compassionate and caring person who was always willing to lend an ear to anyone who needed one.

Her warmth, generosity, and unwavering ability to make others feel heard and cared for will remain in the hearts of all who knew and loved her.

Friends are invited to visit with the family at the Blair & Son Funeral Home, 15 Gore St. W. Perth on Friday, August 21, 2026 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Then again on Saturday, August 22, 2026 from 9:30am to 10:30am. Mass will take place at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church 38 Wilson St. E., Perth on Saturday, August 22, 2026 at 11:00am. A reception will follow at the Blair & Son Family Reception Centre.

In Honour of Lynne, memorial contributions to the Canadian Cancer Society would be greatly appreciated.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com

Obituaries

JAMES
Ann Elizabeth

OCT. 15, 1944 – AUG. 9, 2026



It is with deep sadness that we announce, Ann James passed away peacefully at home on Sunday, August 9th, 2026, at the age of 81, with her family by her side.

Ann was predeceased by her parents, Thomas and Doreen Harris. She was a devoted wife to David for 60 years, a loving mother to Debra (Rob), and a very proud Grandma to Henry. She also leaves behind her siblings Linda (Barry), Pauline (Paul), Trevor and Clive; her nieces and nephews Claire, Michelle, Daniel, Emily, Megan, Molly, Elise, Tim, Rebecca and Hannah; her great-nieces and great-nephews, sister-in-law Rosemary, and good friend, Jean. Ann took an enormous interest in all of their lives and will be deeply missed by them.

Before moving to Canada in 1998, when they purchased a farm in Balderson, Ann and David lived in the UK, where they ran a farm. To help with the farm finances, Ann took what was intended to be a temporary administrative job at a mail-order catalogue company. As it turned out, Ann was rather good at it. That "temporary" job eventually led to her running an entire call centre – an impressive outcome for a job that was only meant to help pay some farm bills!

When Ann and David arrived in Balderson, Ann threw herself wholeheartedly into her new role as a "farmer's wife" and embraced everything the "new country" had to offer. She loved walking on the farm, pottering around Perth, and being outdoors surrounded by nature. She had a particular love of flowers and plants, and took great pleasure in the birds that visited her numerous feeders.

Ann had a remarkably quick mathematical mind and an incredible general knowledge. Her family in the UK nicknamed her "The Brains of Balderson," and when a game of Trivial Pursuit was suggested, everyone was keen to have Ann on their team.

But more than anything in the world, Ann loved her family. She devoted herself to doing things for them, both big and small, always looking for ways to make their lives a little easier or a little better.

Recently, her grandson Henry asked her if there was anything she wished she had done differently in her life. Her answer was simply, "No, not at all." How many people get to say that? Ann did, and we think that says a great deal about the life she lived.

Ann's kindness, love and strength, and the countless ways she cared for the people around her, will be forever remembered by her family.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to nurse Kelly Moore for her knowledge, kindness and compassion. Her dedication and support made it possible for the family to honour Ann's wish to remain at home, surrounded by the people she loved. The family would also like to thank neighbours and friends for their kindness during Ann's illness, particularly Brenda Blackburn and her daughter Heidi.

Ann supported many different charities throughout her life, making it difficult to choose just one in her memory. If you wish to make a donation in Ann's memory, the family invites you to choose a charity that is meaningful to you.

In accordance with Ann's wishes, there will be no visitation or funeral service.

Blair & Son
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For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com



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Smiths Falls Record Journal

Vendors are welcome

County Harvest Festival returns on September 13



THE TOWN meets the country at the Harvest Festival.

Mark your calendars: the Lanark County Harvest Festival returns Sunday, September 13, 2025, for a day of food, fun, and farming pride. Running from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Beckwith Park, this beloved annual event is co-hosted by Lanark County and Beckwith Township.

At its heart, the festival is a celebration of the region's agricultural roots and the passionate farmers and artisans who bring fresh, local products to the community. From vibrant produce and handmade crafts to gourmet treats and live entertainment, attendees can expect a showcase of Lanark County's finest.

"The Lanark County Harvest Festival is gearing up for another incredible year, and we want you to be part of it," said one event organizer. "Whether you're a vendor or a visitor, there's something special waiting for you."

With vendor booths, farm-fresh food, and stories behind every stall, the festival offers a unique opportunity to connect with local makers and discover what makes their offerings so meaningful.

Admission is free, and guests are encouraged to bring friends—and a love for all things local.

On Sunday, September 1

Ukrainian Fest features an embroidery exhibit



This year's UA FEST will feature the display of a 160.5-metre embroidered cloth created by communities across Europe.

The UA FEST, also known as Ukrainian Fest Lanark County, will be held on Sunday, September 13, from noon to 8 p.m. at Riverside Park, 137 John Street, Carleton Place. Admission is free. The event includes Ukrainian food, live music and dance, a craft market, children's activities, workshops and a heritage exhibition. Part of the festival's annual proceeds is donated to organizations working with children affected by the war in Ukraine.

The festival began after Carleton Place resident Gloria Bradley held a garage sale in spring 2023 to help Ukrainian families who had arrived in Lanark County. Organizers say the proceeds helped pay for the first festival that September, which drew about 1,000 people. Organizers estimate that attendance exceeded 4,000 in 2025 and say they hope to attract 5,000 people this year. The festival is organized by volunteers.

The embroidered cloth, called Rushnyk of Unity-Rushnyk of Victory, consists of more than 89 panels contributed by families, churches, schools and organizations supporting Ukraine and Ukrainians abroad. Since its launch in 2024, the rushnyk has grown panel by panel through Ukrainian communities across Europe. It is now travelling internationally; Carleton Place is scheduled to become its first North American stop. Each community hosting the cloth is invited to embroider a section of white linen or cotton. UA FEST is holding open stitching circles during August so residents can contribute. On September 13, the Lanark County panel will be sewn onto the rushnyk on the festival's main stage. It will include the name Carleton Place alongside the names of Ukrainian communities connected to local participants.



Tay Valley Township

JOB POSTING
HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

Tay Valley Township is seeking a full-time Heavy Equipment Operator. Reporting to the Public Works Manager, the Heavy Equipment Operator will operate all heavy equipment as required to fulfill assigned duties including trucks, snow plows, back hoes, loaders and graders and will maintain roads in accordance with established standards, identify road related problems, conduct daily inspections and maintain equipment in a safe operating condition, perform general building and facility maintenance, respond to emergency situations, among other public works related duties. A detailed job description is available at www.tayvalleytwp.ca.

As the preferred candidate you will have exceptional customer service skills and have a solid understanding of safety rules and the use of personal protective equipment. The successful candidate will have working experience in a related area, be able to work with minimal supervision, and be willing to participate in training. Demonstrated experience working with the public is a requirement. You must possess excellent communication skills, strong time management and organizational skills, and a proficiency in English, written and spoken. A Class D driver's license with a "Z" endorsement is a requirement. Experience in a municipal environment would be considered an asset.

The wage range is $30.25 to $33.61 (2025 rates, under review) per hour, based on a 40-hour work week. A comprehensive benefit package is available to all employees.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit a covering letter and resume clearly marked **"Heavy Equipment Operator"**, prior to 9:00 a.m., September 3rd, 2026, to:

Tay Valley Township
Attn: Deputy Clerk
217 Harper Road
Perth, ON K7H 3C6
or e-mail: deputyclerk@tayvalleytwp.ca

Tay Valley Township is an equal opportunity employer, committed to ensuring all candidates are able to participate in the interview process fully and equally. If contacted for employment, please let us know if you require any accommodations to ensure you can participate fully and equally during the recruitment and selection process.

We thank all applicants for their interest and only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Personal information collected from applications is collected under the authority of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and will be used to determine qualifications for employment. Questions about the collection of Information should be directed to the Clerk at the address indicated above.

144398

Stephanie Mols
REALTOR®

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LOG HOME INCLUDES FURNISHINGS





Welcoming 2014 log home with 0.6 acre on bay flowing into Big Rideau. Open concept and stone fireplace. Upstairs loft, 3 bedrooms & 4-pc bath. Furnishings included. On paved township road. 10 mins Smiths Falls. $789,000 MLS X13453916



FACING WEST ON PALMERSTON LAKE







Upgraded well-maintained cottage on 2 lakefront acres. Vaulted livingroom. Sunroom. Two bedrms & bathroom with laundry station. Plus, bunkie with hydro. Double garage. Easy access on township maintained paved road. Listed for $424,900

STONE BUNGALOW WITH ART STUDIO





On 3.5 acres, sprawling hi-end 3bed 3bath home. Granite kitchen. Familyrm. Sunrm. Primary suite. Art studio in a separate wing. Attached double garage has sauna. 15 mins Carleton Place or 25 mins Smiths Falls. $864,900 MLS X13617732



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Jennifer Miller seeks re-election to Smiths Falls council – Page 9

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2026 SMITHS FALLS, ONTARIO SMITHSFALLS.JOURNAL@GMAIL.COM

Smiths Falls Record
Journal



Mayoral race has 3 candidates & 15 for councillor

PAGE 3

Third set of human remains identified as the missing man

PAGE 2

The Smiths Falls Ribfest, running Friday, Aug. 28 through Sunday, Aug. 30 at Centennial Park.

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Ukrainian Fest will be held on Sunday, September 13th

The UA FEST, also known as Ukrainian Fest Lanark County, will be held on Sunday, September 13, from noon to 8 p.m. at Riverside Park, 137 John Street, Carleton Place. Admission is free. The event includes Ukrainian food, live music and dance, a craft market, children's activities, workshops and a heritage exhibition. Part of the festival's annual proceeds is donated to organizations working with children affected by the war in Ukraine.

The festival began after Carleton Place resident Gloria Bradley held a garage sale in spring 2023 to help Ukrainian families who had arrived in Lanark County. Organizers say the proceeds helped pay for the first festival that September, which drew about 1,000 people. Organizers estimate that attendance exceeded 4,000 in 2025 and say they hope to attract 5,000 people this year.

Perth Fair will be held on Labour Day weekend

The Perth & District Agricultural Society will hold the 179th annual Perth Fair on Labour Day weekend, Thursday September 3 to Sunday September 6 at the Perth Fair Grounds, 50 Arthur Street. Events will include the "Perth's Got Talent" show, a demolition derby, lawnmower races, an antique car and tractor show, lawn tractor, tractor and truck pulls, the Team Absolute K9 performance show, children's activities and musical performances.

The Lanark County 4-H Club will have displays, with prizes awarded, and you'll also find horse and cattle shows and competitions. There will also be competitions and contests in several categories including home baking, honey, maple syrup, quilts, woodworking and, new for 2026, a place setting contest. You can purchase tickets online for both the fair and the midway at www.perthfair.com/about.

Annual Purse Event is on Thurs. October 1

The Purse Event, an annual fundraiser for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lanark County, will be held on Thursday October 1 at the Smiths Falls Golf & Country Club, 125 Golf Club Rd. There will be an in-person auction of over 50 brand new brand name purses by designers such as Kate Spade, Tory Burch, Michael Kors, Coach and Anne Klein.

The ticket cost has yet to be announced, but last year it was $45 per person and include a glass of Prosecco or a non-alcoholic beverage and hors d'oeuvres, and access to a photo booth. A cash bar will be available throughout the evening.

There will also be a silent auction featuring decor, fashion, jewelry, accessories, and more. Doors open at 5 p.m., the live auction will begin at 6:15 p.m. and the event is scheduled to end at 9 p.m. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lanark County is a social services organization located in Smiths Falls which matches young people facing adversity with a caring mentor.

Near Smiths Falls

Third set of human remains identified as the missing man

Ontario Provincial Police have confirmed that a third set of human remains discovered on a rural property northeast of Smiths Falls belongs to Lawrence Bertrim, who disappeared nearly four years ago.

Police said Bertrim's remains were located Aug. 6 on a property on Kelly Jordan Road. A postmortem examination subsequently confirmed his identity.

Bertrim was 42 when he disappeared. He was last seen at about 11 p.m. on Sept. 30, 2022, in downtown Smiths Falls.

The cause of his death has not yet been determined.

The discovery is the latest development in a major investigation centred on the Kelly Jordan Road property, where police have now located the remains of three people who had previously been reported missing.

The first remains were discovered Oct. 30, 2025, while OPP officers were executing a search warrant. They were later identified as Robbie Thomson, who had been reported missing in October 2023.

Four people have since been arrested and charged in connection with Thomson's death.

A second set of remains was located on the property July 20. Those remains were identified following a postmortem examination as 75-year-old Robert Lambert of Montague Township.

Lambert had been reported missing to Lanark County OPP on Nov. 30, 2018, and had last been seen in early July of that year.

Police said the cause of Lambert's death has also not been determined. No arrests have been made in connection with his death and that investigation remains ongoing.

The discovery of Bertrim's remains brings an important measure of certainty for his family, but police say investigators still have significant work ahead.



"Locating Lawrence Bertrim is a significant development for his family, who have waited nearly four years for answers, and for the investigative team, who have worked relentlessly on this case," OPP Detective Inspector Jennifer Patton of the Criminal Investigation Branch said.

"While this discovery marks important progress, the investigation is far from complete."

Patton acknowledged the intense public interest surrounding the discovery of three missing people on the same property.

"We understand the public interest generated by the discovery of three missing persons on a single property, and we ask for patience as investigators continue to follow the evidence wherever it leads," she said.

A $50,000 Government of Ontario reward remains in effect for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or people responsible for Bertrim's disappearance.

The investigation is being conducted by Lanark County OPP and the Smiths Falls Police Service under the direction of the OPP Criminal Investigation Branch, working with the Office of the Chief Coroner and the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service.

Several specialized OPP units have also assisted, including forensic identification officers, canine teams, aviation services, the Emergency Response Team and the Urban Search and Rescue CBRNE Response Team.

Police said residents can expect an increased police presence on Kelly Jordan Road as the investigation continues.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the dedicated OPP tip line at 1-844-677-9404. Anonymous information can be provided through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS).

Correction

A correction on the story about council candidate Bill Dickson: While he worked for the OPP he was never a police officer.

Smiths Falls police lay 181 charges in the month of July

Smiths Falls police responded to more than 750 calls for service and laid 181 criminal charges during July, according to the department's latest monthly statistics.

The Smiths Falls Police Service reported officers handled 757 calls for service during the month, resulting in 60 arrests.

Police laid 181 criminal charges, along with 64 traffic-related charges. Officers also carried out 89 proactive traffic stops as part of enforcement efforts on local streets.

The figures provide a snapshot of police activity during one of the busiest periods of the year, when warmer weather and community events bring more people onto local roads, sidewalks and public spaces.

Calls involving intimate partner violence continued to account for a notable portion of police work. Officers responded to 35 intimate partner violence calls during July.

Mental health-related incidents also remained part of the department's workload, with police responding to 25 calls involving mental health concerns.

Beyond responding to incidents and conducting investigations, Smiths Falls police recorded a significant amount of time devoted to community visibility and engagement.

Officers spent 27 hours conducting foot patrols and another 16 hours on bike patrol. The department also reported 109 hours of community service during the month.

Foot and bicycle patrols allow officers to interact directly with residents and businesses while maintaining a visible police presence in areas that may be less accessible during regular vehicle patrols.

The July figures show the wide range of demands placed on the municipal police service, from criminal investigations and traffic enforcement to mental health calls, intimate partner violence incidents and community-oriented policing.

While the 181 criminal charges represent the number of charges laid during the month, they do not necessarily correspond to 181 separate incidents or individuals. A single investigation or arrest can result in multiple charges.

Similarly, the 757 calls for service include a broad range of police responses and should not be interpreted as 757 criminal incidents.

Three-way mayoral race

Crowded council field set for election

Smiths Falls voters will have plenty of choices when they elect a new mayor and council this fall, with three candidates seeking the mayor's chair and 15 others listed in the race for six council seats.

At the close of nominations last Friday, the candidate list has Nate Morris, Christopher G. Cummings and former councillor Peter McKenna running for mayor.

Morris was among the first candidates to enter the mayoral contest and has been campaigning on issues including municipal accountability, water costs and infrastructure.

Cummings brings previous municipal experience to the race. He served three terms on Smiths Falls council before leaving municipal politics in 2018 and is now seeking a return to town hall as mayor.

The late addition to the mayoral field is councillor Peter McKenna, whose nomination means the election has developed into a three-candidate contest rather than the two-way race that had initially been shaping up.

The council ballot is considerably more crowded.

The town lists Greg Hull, Chance Peterson, incumbent Jennifer Miller, Spring Loomes, incumbent Stephen Robinson, Bill Dickson, Alex Brown, Peggy Lee Tye-Bernicky, Zachary Thoms, Marie-Pier Guerin, incumbents Dawn Quinn and Christopher McGuire, Lewis Koluk, James Creighton and Leslie Allison Richardson as unofficial candidates for councillor.

With 15 candidates competing for six positions, Smiths Falls voters could see one of the more competitive council elections in recent years.

The field includes incumbent councillors as well as a sizeable group of challengers seeking their first seat at the council table.

Among the challengers is Bill Dickson, well known throughout Lanark County from his lengthy career with the Ontario Provincial Police, where he served for years as an East Region media relations coordinator.

The large council race comes as Smiths Falls faces a series of major decisions that will carry into the next council term. Municipal finances, property taxes, water and wastewater costs, policing, infrastructure renewal, housing development and economic growth are all expected to figure prominently in the campaign.

Candidates will also be competing for votes at a time when the town is undertaking substantial infrastructure projects and considering how to accommodate future residential and commercial growth.

Stepping out politics is soon-to-be former mayor Shawn Pankow, and councillor Jay Brennan.

School Boards

Running for the school boards is incumbent Jamie Schoular as a candidate for the Upper Canada District School Board. For the French public Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario, Patrick Robert and Anab Yussuf Mohamed are listed as candidates. The town's candidate list remains identified as unofficial.

The election will once again be conducted without conventional polling-station paper ballots. The town says the 2026 municipal election will use internet and telephone voting, allowing eligible electors to cast their ballots remotely.

Voting Day is Monday, Oct. 26, and Smiths Falls will conduct the election entirely through internet and telephone voting.



A late filing from Peter McKenna for the mayoralty.

Rideau Lakes election has a 5-way for mayoralty – Page 10

Lighthouse Publications

David Leonardo
Publisher

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

Back-to-School

Statistics, budget, and school dates to take note of



Thousands of students across Eastern Ontario will head back to the classroom Wednesday, Sept. 2, as the Upper Canada District School Board and Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario begin the 2026-27 school year.

The date is two days earlier than Sept. 4, which marked the return to classes in an earlier school year. Both boards have confirmed Sept. 2 as the first instructional day for students this fall, following a professional activity day for staff on Tuesday, Sept. 1.

The Upper Canada District School Board serves communities across Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and Prescott-Russell.

Its trustees approved a $473.1-million revenue budget for 2026-27, with projected expenses of $472.7 million and a $400,000 surplus. The budget represents a $2.7-million increase in revenue over the previous year.

Among the major spending commitments are $67.6 million for special education, $3.4 million for Indigenous education, $3.1 million for literacy and numeracy programs and $2.4 million for student safety and well-being.

The UCDSB also plans $92.9 million in capital investments, including major school construction and upgrades throughout the district.

Enrolment growth

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario is also preparing for enrolment growth.

Its 2026-27 budget totals approximately $230 million for operations, along with a $16.8-million capital program for improvements to schools and other facilities.

The Catholic board is projecting enrolment of about 14,290 students, an increase of 201 students over the previous year. The budget also provides for the equivalent of 14 additional full-time staff, including teachers, educational assistants and early childhood educators.

The two boards coordinate their annual calendars in part because they share student transportation services.

Following the Sept. 2 start, students will have their first statutory holiday on Labour Day, Monday, Sept. 7.

Other major dates for the 2026-27 school year include the Christmas break from Dec. 21 through Jan. 1 and March Break from March 15 to 19.

Students are scheduled to finish classes Friday, June 25, 2027.

The school calendar also includes a professional activity day on Monday, Oct. 26, timed to coincide with Ontario's municipal election day.

Fall weather forecast

It's only August, but after a wet and stormy summer, you may be wondering what kind of weather fall has in store for us. The Old Farmer's Almanac is predicting that September and October will be cooler than normal in southern Ontario, with rainfall well above the average.

The last week of September is expected to be especially chilly and wet. However, temperatures will be returning closer to seasonal in October. The average temperature in September is expected to be 15ºC, which is 1 C below normal for the month, and the average temperature in October is expected to be 11ºC, which is normal for that time of year.

During September and October, short bursts of warmer weather will interrupt the cool and chilly temperatures.

Meteorologists say that it's too early to predict what the weather in November and the winter months will be like.

Will Lanark County be among those on the petition?



Guest Columnist

by David Leonardo

It may have started with one Calgary resident, but a petition calling for the removal of the United States ambassador to Canada has rapidly become a national political statement.

The question closer to home is whether Lanark County residents will be among those adding their names.

As of Saturday, Aug. 22, House of Commons e-petition e-7531 had 249,196 validated signatures, including an extraordinary 106,877 from Ontario. The petition was initiated by Leanne Walker of Calgary and is sponsored in Parliament by Green Party Leader Elizabeth May, MP for Saanich—Gulf Islands.

Those numbers deserve attention.

The House of Commons website does not publicly break the signatures down by municipality or federal riding (although it does by province), so there is no way to tell from the posted statistics how many people in Perth, Smiths Falls, Carleton Place, Mississippi Mills or the surrounding Lanark County townships have signed.

But with more than 100,000 Ontario names already attached, it would be surprising if there were none.

The petition calls on the federal government to declare U.S. Ambassador Pete Hoekstra persona non grata and request his removal from Canada.

That is no small demand.

Ambassadors are normally the people charged with lowering the temperature between countries, explaining their government's position and keeping lines of communication open when relations become difficult.

The Canadians behind this petition argue Hoekstra has too often done the opposite.

The petition cites his characterization of Canada's 2025 federal election as "anti-American," his comments surrounding U.S. President Donald Trump's repeated references to Canada becoming a "51st state," and what petitioners describe as interventions in Canadian political debate that are inconsistent with normal diplomatic behaviour.

Hoekstra did suggest Trump's 51st-state language could be viewed as a "term of endearment," although Canadians were free to interpret it as they wished.

There are more serious allegations behind the petition as well.

It points to Hoekstra's links with a Michigan-based voter-identification application later used by Alberta's Centurion Project. Hoekstra has said he was unaware of the app's use by the Alberta separatist organization. Elections Alberta subsequently obtained a court injunction over the unauthorized use of provincial electoral-list information by the Centurion Project.

Then there are meetings involving the Alberta Prosperity Project.

The separatist organization has acknowledged contacts with American officials, while reports say its representatives met U.S. State Department officials three times beginning in April 2025. Hoekstra has denied that the Trump administration was meeting with separatists to strategize about Alberta independence.

Those distinctions matter.

A petition is an argument, not a judicial finding. Its allegations should not automatically be treated as proven simply because hundreds of thousands of Canadians have signed it.

Nor does signing mean Hoekstra will be packing his bags.

The petition is not binding on Prime Minister Mark Carney's government. Sponsorship by May does not mean Parliament has endorsed its contents either. Parliamentary sponsorship allows a qualifying petition to proceed through the House of Commons process.

What the numbers do provide is a measure of public sentiment.

And this particular measure is becoming difficult to dismiss.

The petition opened July 21. In barely a month it has approached a quarter-million signatures. Ontario alone accounts for almost 43 per cent of the total. British Columbia has more than 50,000 names, while Alberta — where the petition originated and where much of the separatism controversy has played out — has more than 27,000.

The petition asks Ottawa to do three things: declare Hoekstra persona non grata and seek his removal; raise his conduct formally with Washington under the principles of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations; and have a parliamentary committee investigate possible U.S. diplomatic interference in Canadian domestic affairs.

Canadians have until Nov. 18 at 3:41 p.m. EDT to decide whether they agree.

And that brings the question back to Lanark County.

Canada-U.S. relations are hardly an abstract issue here. Eastern Ontario lives with the consequences of cross-border trade, tariffs, tourism, agricultural markets and the health of the Canadian economy.

People in Lanark County may disagree profoundly about Donald Trump, Mark Carney, Alberta separatism or whether expelling an ambassador would improve an already difficult relationship.

That is precisely why the petition is worth signing.

At nearly a quarter-million signatures, this has moved beyond a fringe internet campaign. It has become a significant expression of Canadian unease about where the relationship with Washington is heading and about how a foreign ambassador should conduct himself while serving in this country.

Whether Lanark County adds substantially to that number is something the public statistics may never tell us.

But between now and Nov. 18, plenty of Lanark County residents will have the opportunity to answer the question for themselves.

OPP issues many safety reminders

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) would like to remind everyone that taking a moment to secure your property and think about personal safety can help prevent unwanted incidents and keep our communities safer for everyone. Whether you're heading out for the day, parking your vehicle overnight, or meeting someone through an online marketplace, a little extra caution can go a long way.

Keep your home, garage, sheds, and other outbuildings locked when not in use. Always lock your vehicles, even when they are parked at home. Avoid leaving valuables, tools, or other items visible inside vehicles. Make sure off-road vehicles, trailers, tools, and other valuable equipment are properly locked and secured. Consider additional security measures such as motion-activated lighting and security cameras. Consider registering your security cameras with CamSafe. Registered cameras can help police identify potential sources of video should an incident occur in your neighbourhood.

Are you buying or selling items online? Facebook Marketplace and other online platforms can be convenient ways to buy and sell items, but it's important to protect your personal information and safety. Avoid sharing unnecessary personal information, including your home address, financial information, or daily routine. Whenever possible, arrange meetings in a safe, public location rather than at your home.

SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

TOWN PAGE

SMITHS FALLS

AUGUST 26, 2026

FIREWORKS AND FAMILY FUN RETURN TO SMITHS FALLS

Mark your calendars for Sunday, September 6 as two exciting events take place in Smiths Falls! The rescheduled Canada Day fireworks will light up the sky over Lower Reach Park beginning at 8:15 p.m. Earlier in the day, families can enjoy The Keepers at the Youth Arena, featuring a sensory-friendly show at 12 p.m. and public shows at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Each show includes a wildlife and dinosaur display, opportunities to interact with the animals, and special character appearances for photos. Don't miss this full day of family-friendly fun!

MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2026

Register to Vote!

Make sure you're on the voters list so you receive important election information and can vote quickly and easily on election day.

✔ Confirm you're registered
✔ Update your address or information
✔ Add yourself to the voters list

Check your registration today: ***www.RegisterToVoteON.ca***.

HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE REMINDER

The Hazardous Waste Site will close for the season on September 5. Hours of operation are from 8 AM to noon on Saturdays only. This is a free service for Smiths Falls residents and requires proof of residency. For a list of acceptable materials, please visit: ***smithsfalls.ca/HHW***.

TRAINING NOTICE

On September 1 from 6:30 PM to 9 PM, Smiths Falls Fire Department and Smiths Falls Police Service will be participating in a joint training exercise at Victoria Park. Residents may notice an increased presence of emergency vehicles and personnel from both organizations, with training activities taking place both in and around the water.

The BIG Art Gallery AT THE FALLS

Come Visit!
Wednesday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 4p.m.
25 Beckwith Street North. Smiths Falls

CALL FOR ARTISTS
Submissions to the fall show now open until August 28th! Email: info@smithsfallschamber.ca

COUNCIL MEETINGS

September 8, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council 5 PM
September 14, 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting 5 PM
Attend in person at Town Hall (77 Beckwith Street North)
or view live streamed proceedings on:
Facebook - facebook.com/townofsmithsfalls
YouTube - Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
For Council, Committee and Board meeting agendas, visit:
smithsfalls.ca/meeting

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

On May 25, Town Council awarded over $94,000 dollars through the CIP to property owners in the downtown core to support their investment on façade improvements and interior upgrades to make the downtown more attractive, support heritage restoration and make commercial spaces more usable. Notably, Scott's Shoe Store was welcomed to the downtown core and awarded funding for their façade and electrical upgrades. They were approved for signage, a new retractable awning, exterior lighting, planter boxes, an electrical upgrade from fuse panels to electric panels. Total project cost is $16,240 and approved CIP funding is $12,334. Nathan Scott, the owner of Scott's Shoe store said "We are overwhelmed by the support from Smiths Falls residents and Council. The improvements will change the look of the heritage property giving it a welcoming street presence. We are excited to be a part of this vibrant community!" Mayor Shawn Pankow added "It is good to see our store fronts filling up with long standing family business enterprises like Scott's Shoes. The CIP program and the Heritage Conservation District Plan is working the way Council intended in updating our heritage buildings to improve their usability and revealing the heritage charm of the building." Interested in improving your business or property? The Town is now accepting applications for the Fall Intake of the Community Improvement Plan. Book your pre-consultation appointment today to see if your project idea qualifies for up to 85% funding! ***613-283-4124 ext. 1136***, or email: ***melmsley@smithsfalls.ca***.

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144432

Our History

In Lanark our country fairs remain cherished

BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON



In a region with such a rich agricultural history, among the most highly anticipated events of the year are the annual fall fairs. Who remembers the excitement of the bright lights, midway rides, games of chance, and tasty carnival foods?

Scheduled in unison with the autumn harvest, fairground displays and lively competitions feature horses, cattle, field crops, homecrafts, vegetables, honey and maple syrup. Established by early settlers as a way to introduce better methods and tools for farming, the early fairs also provided an opportunity for isolated rural families to connect, exchange information, and socialize.

The birth of agricultural societies and fairs began with the pioneer settlers. The first in Ontario was the Agricultural Society of Upper Canada, established in 1792 at Niagara on the Lake.

By the late 1800s, these societies, organized by townships and counties, numbered over 500 across Ontario, with their aim to improve and highlight the rural lifestyle.

In the late 1830s and 1840s competitions like plowing matches and horse-racing, alongside crop displays, became annual events, and Carleton Place, and Perth were among the earliest towns associated with the Bathurst District Agricultural Society.

Later, the South Lanark Agricultural Society established the hugely popular Perth Fair, a proud tradition beginning in 1847. The North Lanark Agricultural Society was organized and evolved into an annual fair in Almonte, now in its 166th year. The Middleville Fair began in 1851 with the formation of the Middleville Agricultural Society, and another early organization, the McDonald's Corners Agricultural Society, established their first fair in 1853.

Although Smiths Falls did not host a traditional fall fair, a poultry and turkey fair began in the 1860s, situated along Beckwith Street, and by the 1890s evolved into the largest poultry market in Canada. The annual Lombardy Fair dates back to 1866, making it one-year older than Canadian confederation, while the Maberly Fair traces its origins back to 1882, proudly holding the title of "the greatest little agricultural fair in Ontario".

Through the decades, many fall fairs shared some time-honoured traditions including livestock judging, comparing muscle, volume, and breed characteristics. Ribbons are awarded to prize-winning beef cattle, dairy cows, horses, pigs, sheep, chickens, and goats. An animal from a prize-winning farm commands a higher price making this segment of the fair a serious and often lucrative competition.

Another highly competitive program features the judging of wheat, hay, barley, corn, soybeans and oats. An important aspect of this category through the years has been improving seed quality, planting methods, use of fertilizers and sharing information with other farmers. In the early days women rarely worked outside the home and the annual fall fair was a welcoming forum to display their skills. Baking, sewing, quilting, preserving jams, pickles, and canning fruit, were some of the categories where women could showcase their talents and win some prize money.

In a long-standing tradition hungry fair crowds were often served by local church groups and community clubs from booths stocked with homemade sandwiches, burgers, butter tarts, and pies.

Prior to the times of traveling midways most early entertainment focused on agricultural displays along with horse or harness racing, then later, grandstand shows and demolition derbies became popular.

By the mid-1900s many fall fairs in Ontario featured mechanical rides like the Ferris wheel, Tilt-a-Whirl, and merry-go-rounds, along with carnival games and food vendors. The early amusement companies traveled from town to town in rail cars, like the Conklin Shows, established in 1916.

Over many generations, throughout the county, fall fairs have provided an extensive showcase of the best local agriculture, as well as informative heritage displays. With judged competitions in dozens of categories, old fashioned races, tractor pulls, and homemade harvest turkey suppers, there's something for the young and not-so-young at the annual fairs.

Established by the founders of our historic agricultural societies Lanark County's unforgettable fall fairs continue their long-standing pioneer tradition as the one of the year's most anticipated events.

* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

KEY INFORMATION TO MUNICIPAL ELECTORS IN THE COUNTY OF LANARK & THE TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS REGARDING THE 2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Are You on the Voters' List?

The List of eligible voters for the upcoming municipal election has been prepared by the Returning Officer/ Clerk of your municipality.

As of September 1, 2026, all Voters should ensure that their names and relevant information are correct on the Voters' List. To be added, deleted or to make any other corrections to your information, contact or visit the municipal office where you are entitled to vote, with proper identification and proof of residence during normal office hours beginning September 1, up to and including the close of voting on October 26 at 8 p.m.

Who Can Vote?

A person is entitled to vote in a municipal election if he or she on voting day,

- resides in the local municipality, or is the owner or tenant of land in the municipality, or the spouse of such owner or tenant; and
- is a Canadian citizen, and
- is at least 18 years old, and
- is not prohibited from voting under the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 or otherwise prohibited by law.

Who Cannot Vote?

The following cannot vote:

- a person who is serving a sentence of imprisonment in penal or correctional institution;
- a corporation;
- a person acting as executor or trustee or in any other representative capacity, except as a voting proxy in a traditional election;
- a person who was convicted of the corrupt practice described in subsection 90(3), if voting day in the current election is less than five years after voting day in the election in respect of which he or she was convicted.

Returning Officers Contact Information.

TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS

Returning Officer – Kerry Costello
Town of Smiths Falls
77 Beckwith Street North, P.O. Box 695
Smiths Falls, Ontario K7A 4T6
(613-283-4124)
www.smithsfalls.ca

TOWNSHIP OF MONTAGUE

Returning Officer – Kirsten Cote
Township of Montague
6547 Roger Stevens Drive, P.O. Box 755
Smiths Falls, Ontario K7A 4W6
(613-283-7478)
www.township.montague.on.ca

TOWN OF PERTH

Returning Officer – Amanda Noël
Town of Perth
80 Gore Street E.
Perth, Ontario K7H 1H9
(613-267-3311)
www.perth.ca

TOWNSHIP OF LANARK HIGHLANDS

Returning Officer – Nicole Guthrie
Township of Lanark Highlands
75 George Street, P.O. Box 340
Lanark, Ontario K0G 1K0
(613-259-2398) (1-800-239-4695)
www.lanarkhighlands.ca

TOWN OF CARLETON PLACE

Returning Officer – Stacey Blair
Town of Carleton Place
175 Bridge Street
Carleton Place, Ontario K7C 2V8
(613-257-6212)
www.carletonplace.ca

TOWNSHIP OF DRUMMOND/ NORTH ELMSLEY

Returning Officer – Janie Laidlaw
Township of Drummond/North Elmsley
310 Port Elmsley Road
Perth, Ontario K7H 3C7
(613-267-6500)
www.dnetownship.ca

TOWNSHIP OF BECKWITH

Returning Officer – Cassandra MacGregor
Township of Beckwith
2022 Beckwith Park Lane
Carleton Place, Ontario K7C 0V9
(613-257-1539)
www.beckwith.ca

MUNICIPALITY OF MISSISSIPPI MILLS

Returning Officer – Jeanne Harfield
Municipality of Mississippi Mills
3131 Old Perth Road
Almonte, Ontario K0A 1A0
(613-256-2064) (1-866-779-8666)
www.mississippimills.ca

TAY VALLEY TOWNSHIP

Returning Officer – Amanda Mabo
Tay Valley Township
217 Harper Road
Perth, Ontario K7H 3C6
(613-267-5353) (1-800-810-0161)
www.tayvalleytwp.ca

Voting Method for All Municipalities is Internet/Telephone

A Voter Information Letter will be mailed to eligible voters directly in early October, which will provide a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to allow you to vote 24 hours a day for 7 days during the voting period from October 19th - 26th, from any telephone or any device connected to the internet. If access to a telephone or internet connection is unavailable to you, a Voter Help Centre will be provided by your municipality with telephone and internet access during the voting period. Please contact your municipality for Voter Help Centre locations and dates and times of operation.

Proof of identity and residence is required in the following instances:

- when adding or deleting your name from the Voters' List
- when correcting your information on the Voters' List
- when re-issuing, activating or deactivating a PIN
- when swearing an oath

144425

Miller seeks re-election to Smiths Falls council

Incumbent council candidate wants to keep Town on course

Councillor Jennifer Miller is seeking another term at the Smiths Falls council table, saying the town has made significant progress during the past four years but still faces major infrastructure and affordability challenges.

Miller, who was elected to council in 2022, said her campaign for re-election will focus on responsible long-term investment in roads, bridges, sewers, parks and public facilities while continuing to support housing, downtown development and economic growth.

"I love Smiths Falls — I think we have an amazing community here and I am passionate about the people, businesses, and the area," Miller said. "I am proud to have served on council over the last four years."

Miller points to a lengthy list of projects completed or advanced during the current term of council, including new parks at Lee Avenue and Alexander Street, construction of a new water tower, reconstruction work on George and Catherine streets and renovations to the Smiths Falls Public Library.

She also cited the creation of a Heritage Conservation District, support for new affordable housing, development of the town square and gazebo, construction of the timber pedestrian bridge and reopening of the Confederation Drive bridge.

Miller said council has also directed more than $1 million annually toward road resurfacing while increasing the town's water capacity to accommodate future growth.

"The past four years brought rising costs, food insecurity and increased pressure on families and community services," she said. "They also brought real progress."

More work ahead

Despite those investments, Miller said there is considerably more work ahead.

"Our roads, bridges, sewers, parks and public facilities require responsible, long-term investment," she said.

Her stated vision for the next term is a Smiths Falls that remains welcoming and affordable while continuing to grow.

Miller said she wants to see reliable municipal infrastructure, vibrant neighbourhoods and a strong downtown where residents are proud to live and businesses are confident investing.

She is also emphasizing her professional and community experience as she asks voters for a second term.

Miller has spent most of the past 20 years working for a local children's charity and has professional experience in economic development, tourism and business operations.



Jennifer Miller seeks another mandate.

She describes herself as a community builder with experience in business development, project management, fiscal oversight, human resources and leadership.

Those skills, she said, have helped shape her approach during her first term on council, particularly when balancing demands for new projects against the financial pressures facing taxpayers.

Municipal governments across Ontario have been dealing with rapidly rising construction costs, aging infrastructure and increased demands for services, while trying to limit increases to property taxes.

For Miller, the challenge facing the next council will be to continue investing without losing sight of affordability.

"My vision is a welcoming, affordable and growing Smiths Falls, with reliable infrastructure, vibrant neighbourhoods and a strong and beautiful downtown where people are proud to live, work and invest," she said.

Miller said her connection to Smiths Falls and her experience during the current term are the principal reasons she wants to continue serving.

Thank-you

"Thank you for putting your trust in me to represent your interests at the council table from 2022 to 2026," she said. "I have taken that responsibility seriously, and I am asking for your support to continue serving Smiths Falls for another term."

Her campaign message is expected to centre on maintaining infrastructure, managing growth and improving the quality of life in established neighbourhoods while continuing to encourage new housing and investment.

"I want to make a difference," Miller said.

More information about Miller's campaign is available at jennifermillerforcouncil.com or through her Jennifer Miller for SF Council Facebook page. She can also be reached by email at jmillersf2026@gmail.com.

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is the news-central for Smiths Falls

Smiths Falls Record Journal

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142465

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Rideau Lakes election has a 5-way for mayoralty

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN

Voters in Rideau Lakes will choose a new mayor and a substantially reshaped council this fall, with five candidates seeking the township's top political job and competitive races underway in all four wards on voting day, Oct. 26.

Mayor Arie Hoogenboom is stepping down, opening the mayor's chair for the first time in years.

Seeking to replace him are John Fenik, Kimberly Brown, incumbent councillor Paula Banks, Ronald Young and Steve Weir.

Among the most recognizable names is Fenik, who arrives in the Rideau Lakes contest with more than two decades of municipal political experience and 16 years as mayor of neighbouring Perth.

Fenik was first elected to Perth council in 1997, became deputy mayor in 2003 and won the mayor's office in 2006. He was acclaimed to a second term in 2010 and remained mayor through 2022. He also served as Lanark County warden in 2010.


John Fenik

That lengthy résumé makes Fenik one of the highest-profile candidates entering municipal politics anywhere in the region this year.

Fenik has experience outside municipal government as well. He was the federal New Democratic Party candidate in Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston in the 2015 federal election.

Originally from London, Ont., Fenik studied social work and graduated from Algonquin College's Child Care Worker program in 1981. He came to Perth for what was originally expected to be a short-term assignment but stayed, building a career in child protection and community service.

Following his years at Perth town hall, Fenik entered community newspaper publishing, purchasing the Review-Mirror in Westport. He has also written books drawing on his experiences in politics and life in the region.

Fenik will, however, face a crowded ballot.

The sometimes controversial Banks brings current Rideau Lakes council experience to the mayoral contest, while Brown, Young and Weir give voters five choices for the position being vacated by Hoogenboom.

The election will also produce considerable turnover around the council table.

Rideau Lakes council consists of the mayor and eight councillors, with two councillors elected from each of four wards: Bastard and South Burgess, South Elmsley, South Crosby and North Crosby-Newboro.

In Ward 1, Bastard and South Burgess, Barb Shea, Brad Gibson and Brian Preston are competing for the two available council seats.

There is a four-candidate contest in Ward 2, South Elmsley, where John McCormack, Kate Ferguson, Marcia Maxwell and Tom Kohler are running.

Ward 3, South Crosby, also has four candidates seeking two seats: Dustin Bulloch, Jordan De Long, Ken Davies and Linda Carr.

In Ward 4, North Crosby-Newboro, the candidates are Adam Ball, Bob Lavoie, Clarence Donnelly and David Wickenden.

Along with Hoogenboom, a number of members of the present council are leaving municipal politics or not seeking their existing positions, ensuring the next council will have a different composition.

School Board

School board trustee positions are also on the ballot.

Gal Koren and Jamie Schoular are seeking the English-language public school board trustee position with the Upper Canada District School Board.

Anab Yussuf Mohamed and Patrick Robert are candidates for the French-language public trustee position with the Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario.

Diane Burns is the candidate listed for French-language Catholic trustee with the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est.

The township will once again use internet and telephone voting rather than paper ballots. Voting opens Monday, Oct. 19 at 10 a.m. and continues around the clock until polls close at 8 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 26. Eligible voters will receive a voter information letter containing the personal identification number needed to cast a ballot.

The large field means voters will have choices throughout Rideau Lakes: five candidates for mayor, three or four candidates in each ward and several trustee contests.

Smiths Falls launches first literary festival this fall

A new cultural attraction from the Town and the Smiths Falls Rotary Club members

Readers, writers and families will gather in downtown Smiths Falls this September as the town launches its first literary festival.

The inaugural Smiths Falls Literary Festival: Small Town, Big Stories will take place Sept. 19 and 20 at several downtown venues, with a weekend of author discussions, community programming, youth activities and live entertainment.

Organizers say the festival is intended to celebrate storytelling while giving audiences an opportunity to meet authors and discuss their work in smaller, more intimate settings.

The program will feature panels covering non-fiction, fiction, romance, young adult literature, mystery and crime, fantasy and environmental literacy.

A wide range of Ontario authors is scheduled to participate, including Lavanya Lakshmi, Heidi Reimer, Anuja Varghese, Ruby Barrett, Kate Cole, Jennifer Whiteford, Christopher Hind, Dennis Stein, Brenda Chapman, Tamara L. Miller, Katie Tallo, Amanda Connolly, Kate Heartfield and Elle Wither.

The festival will also welcome environmentalist and author Diana Beresford-Kroeger, whose work has focused extensively on forests, biodiversity and the relationship between people and the natural environment.

Young writers will have their own place in the festival through a writing contest being organized with local public schools and the Smiths Falls Public Library. Selected submissions will be published in book form by the organizing partners, providing young authors with an opportunity to see their work in print.

Entertainment will include a special evening performance by Outerbridge Magic. Proceeds from the performance will support the Rideau Eco-Literacy Center and its environmental education opportunities for local youth.

Rotary Club

The festival is being organized by the Town of Smiths Falls in partnership with the Rotary Club of Smiths Falls, The Book's Better Bookstore, Smiths Falls Public Library and staff from Duncan J. Schoular Public School.

Local businesses, including Arlie's Bookstore and Bowie's, are also supporting the event.

Organizers are hoping the inaugural festival develops into a new annual cultural attraction for Smiths Falls, drawing both local residents and visitors into the downtown.

Tickets for author panels and special events are now available through Tickets Please. Attendance at some events will be limited in an effort to maintain smaller and more interactive sessions.

The complete festival schedule and additional information are available through the Town of Smiths Falls website.







Candidate believes Smiths Falls can ‘Do Better’

A main campaign platform point of first-time council candidate Alex Brown

Alex Brown says his experience turning complex problems into clear answers is one of the skills he hopes to bring to Smiths Falls council after the Oct. 26 municipal election.

Brown is seeking a council seat on a platform that emphasizes fiscal responsibility, greater transparency at Town Hall, improved municipal services and efforts to attract more family doctors to the community.

“I’m running for Smiths Falls council because I think as a town, we can do better,” Brown said.

He said conversations with residents repeatedly turn to concerns about rising taxes, the cost and pace of municipal decisions and difficulty finding a family doctor.

“If elected, I want council to treat every dollar the way most of us do at home — carefully, with real numbers, not buried reports,” Brown said.

Brown said affordability is particularly important in a community where household incomes are lower than in many other parts of the province, making municipal tax increases more difficult for residents to absorb.

His professional background includes work in technology, data analysis and large-scale information systems.

Brown said he worked his way from customer care into a data analyst position at Shopify before joining Canopy Growth as a learning systems analyst and manager. He later consulted for provincial and federal agencies on information technology platforms.

He currently works as an analyst with the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority, where he said he is involved in deploying national platforms supporting aviation security.

Brown argues that experience has taught him how to examine complicated information, identify problems and present clear solutions — an approach he says is needed at the council table.



Alex Brown has a list of how it can be done better.

Family issues are also central to his campaign.

Biography

Brown has been married for 18 years to his wife, Jennifer, who works at the Smiths Falls library. They are raising two teenagers, Liam, 16, and Lydia, 13.

Brown said being a parent has given him a close view of the condition and importance of local schools, sidewalks, parks and municipal services.

He wants the town to continue improving parks and pedestrian infrastructure for families and seniors while making physician recruitment a stronger priority.

Brown is also calling for more visible accountability when residents report problems with municipal infrastructure.

“When something breaks, residents should have a way to see it, flag it, and watch it actually get fixed,” he said.

His community involvement has included volunteering with local organizations and providing photography and video work to promote Smiths Falls events and the community. He has also volunteered in Ottawa and Kingston.

Among his local volunteer experiences, Brown points to helping with the de-paving project outside the Smiths Falls library as an example of the hands-on approach he hopes to take into municipal government.

Brown said voters should expect councillors to provide understandable explanations for decisions and demonstrate how those decisions are supported by financial and other evidence.

“None of this is complicated,” he said. “It just takes a council willing to give straight answers and back them up with real numbers.”

Smiths Falls voters will elect their next municipal council on Monday, Oct. 26

Spring Loomes enter Smiths Falls Council race — Page 18

Consumer insolvencies are increasing faster

In just three months 37,523 filed

The Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy (OSB) reports that 37,523 Canadian consumers filed for insolvency in the second quarter of this year, a 6.9% increase compared to the same period last year, and the highest quarterly volume since 2009, the all-time highest full year for consumer insolvency filings.

Financial experts say the increase can be attributed to historically high consumer credit-card and tax debt. Canadian homeowners are also dealing with the consequences of with the heavy borrowing that took place during the housing boom of the 2010s, whey they were using their equity to pay their unsecured debts. Falling home values have left owners unable to take equity out of their properties by refinancing their mortgages, or in some cases, owing more money than their home is worth.

Consumer insolvency filing numbers from the OSB include both bankruptcies and consumer proposals. A consumer proposal is an agreement that allows people to extend payments over a longer period, while a bankruptcy means individuals may be required to forfeit assets to pay their debt.

There were 8,600 consumer bankruptcies in the second quarter of 2026, up 13.5% compared to the first quarter, and up 10.3% year-over-year. During the same period, there were 28,923 consumer proposals, which fell by about 2% from the first quarter but climbed by 5.9% year-over-year.

Homeowner insolvencies are now 8% of filings, compared with 5% in 2024. The proportion of two-income households filing for insolvency also spiked to 23%, the highest level since 2017.

Blame fungal disease

Why do Maple trees have spots on the leaves?

A common fungal disease is making Ontario's maple trees turn yellow and drop their leaves earlier than expected.

The disease, called maple tar spot, has symptoms that include dark, slightly raised spots on the leaves that resemble drops of tar. One of the fungal strains can infect native maples such as sugar maples, silver maples, red maples and the hybrid of silver and red maples, the Freeman maple. However, in Ontario it has predominantly affected Norway maples, a non-native tree. The leaves turn yellow then black before they fall off. While tar spot disease is unsightly, it doesn't impact overall tree health but may cause the tree to drop its leaves earlier in the season if it is badly infected. The disease will often pass without permanently damaging the tree.

However, if you're concerned about the health of your maple tree, water it well during dry spells and consider a technique known as water-drenching. This is done by creating a tree well with a one- to two-metre radius around the tree base, filling it with a bale of peat and topping it with pine mulch to hold the peat in place. You can also consider deep root feeding to fertilize the tree but note that feeding should only be done in the spring if a tree is losing its leaves. Finally, be sure to rake and dispose of the fallen leaves in the fall.

OBITUARIES



Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of an obituary in this newspaper. Or, you can call us directly at 514 503-1593. Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.



CAMPBELL McLEAN
Nancy (Agnes)

NOV. 19, 1940 – AUG. 13, 2026

Nancy passed peacefully in her sleep at Sydenham 3, Providence Manor, Kingston, Ontario on Thursday, August 13 in her 86th year. Nancy has gone to be with her loving husband Allan and her beloved son Matthew. Nancy is survived by her precious grandson Foster McLean and his Mother Ali O'Sullivan, her sister and best friend Morag Brintnell (Rodger).

Nancy (aka Aunt Aggie) will be sadly missed by her nephews Christopher Jackson (Diane) and Paul Jackson (late)(Nikki), as well as her great nieces Hannah Jackson (Luke) and Shelby Jackson (Eriks) and her great nephews Hayden Jackson and Hunter Jackson. And she will be fondly remembered by her Silver Foxes, her Book Club and her many friends in Perth, Ontario.

Cremation has taken place and her ashes will be spread along with her husband's and son's at a later date in Perth. Many, many thanks to the staff of Sydenham 3, at Providence Manor, Kingston for their sincere and loving care of my sister during her time there. Those wishing to make a donation in Nancy's honour are suggested to donate to the Canadian Cancer Society or the Canadian Alzheimer's Society.

JAMES REID
FUNERAL HOME, CREMATION AND RECEPTION CENTRE
1900 John Counter Blvd., Kingston
info@jamesreidfuneralhome.com
613.544.3411
jamesreidfuneralhome.com

Your Health

Doctors believe insomnia is linked to heart disease

Medical experts know that insomnia, trouble falling or staying asleep, contributes to many chronic health problems, including heart disease. A study published in the Journal of the American Heart Association documents a link between insomnia and atrial fibrillation (afib), a heart rhythm disorder which raises the risk of both stroke and heart failure. Researchers looked at health data gathered from nearly 1.8 million people aged 49 to 68 without prior evidence of cardiovascular disease. They found that people with insomnia had a 14% greater chance of developing afib. The association was strongest among women and people under age 65.

Routinely failing to get enough sleep (less than seven hours a night) may cause a rise in heart rate, blood pressure, and levels of stress hormones such as cortisol. Cortisol may also contribute directly to physical changes in the atria that disrupt the conduction of electrical signals in the heart. Researchers say the findings reinforce the importance of recognizing insomnia as a risk factor for afib.

Do you feel sleepy all the time?



Do you regularly feel drowsy during the day? Some of the common causes of excessive sleepiness are sleep disorders like obstructive sleep apnea, restless legs syndrome, and insomnia can prevent restorative sleep. Certain medical conditions that can cause sleepiness include thyroid disorders, anemia, diabetes, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, and even certain cancers. Mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and stress can significantly increase the desire to sleep and reduce daytime alertness.

Diets lacking essential nutrients like vitamin B12, iron, magnesium, and zinc can also make you tired. Fatigue is a common side effect of some medications such as sedatives, antihistamines, and some blood pressure medications. Finally, hot and humid weather can make you feel more lethargic, especially if your body is not accustomed to it.

What can you do to improve alertness? First, evaluate your sleep quality: ensure you get 7–9 hours of uninterrupted sleep every night and maintain a consistent sleep schedule. Overhaul your diet: ditch the junk foor and eat balanced meals with sufficient protein, healthy fats, and complex carbohydrates, and consider checking for vitamin deficiencies. Exercise regularly: physical activity can boost energy and improve sleep quality. Therapy, mindfulness, or counseling can help if depression or anxiety contributes to sleepiness. Consult a healthcare professional, as persistent excessive sleepiness may indicate an underlying medical condition that requires evaluation, testing, or treatment.

Use cast iron cookware properly

Cast-iron pans are one of the most versatile tools in the kitchen: they heat evenly, retain heat like no other material and are virtually indestructible if they are cared for properly. Restaurant chefs love them for searing and roasting. But as versatile as they are, professional chefs agree that they aren't the right choice for every kitchen task. The most universally agreed-upon no-no is acidic foods. This means recipes that are heavy on tomatoes or contain more than a few spoonfuls of citrus juice, vinegar or wine and require more than 15 minutes contact with the pot or pan. Acidic foods can erode the pan's surface, giving food a metallic flavor. Seasoned cast iron is fine for quick sautés, but for tomato sauces, pickle brines and wine-heavy braises, choose stainless steel or enameled cast iron.

Fish with a protective layer of skin is great cooked in cast iron, but thin filets without that buffer stick easily if the pan isn't very well-seasoned. For thin or skinless fish fillets or delicate sauces, stainless steel is a better choice. While cast iron excels at searing and roasting meats and vegetables, chefs say they avoid it for soups or other dishes which are heavy on liquid or steam on the grounds that prolonged moisture exposure can wear down seasoning. Use a stainless-steel or enameled Dutch oven for soups, boiling pasta water, poaching eggs or blanching vegetables.

SF social calendar packed with music, food, books and fall fun



Summer may be winding down, but the Smiths Falls entertainment calendar is showing few signs of slowing, with food, motorcycles, live music, books, ghosts and family activities filling the weeks ahead.

The first major attraction after Aug. 26 is Smiths Falls Ribfest, running Friday, Aug. 28 through Sunday, Aug. 30 at Centennial Park. Organized by the Smiths Falls & District Chamber of Commerce, the weekend offers three days of ribs and festival atmosphere beside the Rideau Canal. Hours are 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday.

Also beginning Aug. 28, the Smiths Falls by the Rideau Market continues Friday afternoons at Lower Reach Park. The market runs from 3 to 7 p.m. and returns Sept. 4, 11, 18 and 25, with another date Oct. 2. Visitors can browse seasonal produce, baked goods, meats, crafts, jewelry and other locally produced items while enjoying the waterfront setting.

Motorcycle enthusiasts get one last downtown gathering of the season when Bike Nights on Beckwith returns Wednesday, Sept. 2 from 5 to 8 p.m. The popular downtown event has been held on the first Wednesday of each month through the summer and traditionally fills the core with motorcycles, spectators and activity.

Things become a little more mysterious Friday, Sept. 11, when the Downtown Smiths Falls Ghost Walk returns. The Heritage House Museum-led walk begins at 7 p.m. at Town Hall, 77 Beckwith St. N., and takes visitors through downtown streets and alleyways while guides recount stories of hauntings, local legends and Smiths Falls history.

The following day brings one of the biggest entertainment events of the season.

Music Festival

The Downtown Smiths Falls Music Festival takes over the core Saturday, Sept. 12, with Canadian rock band The Trews headlining the evening program. Free, all-ages entertainment begins on Russell Street East at 1 p.m., with Ambre McLean, Spencer Scharf, DaNielle Hewitt and Landon Bedor scheduled to perform. The ticketed evening portion moves to Miller Brook Place.

Books move to centre stage the following weekend with the town's inaugural Smiths Falls Literary Festival — Small Town, Big Stories, running Sept. 18 to 20.

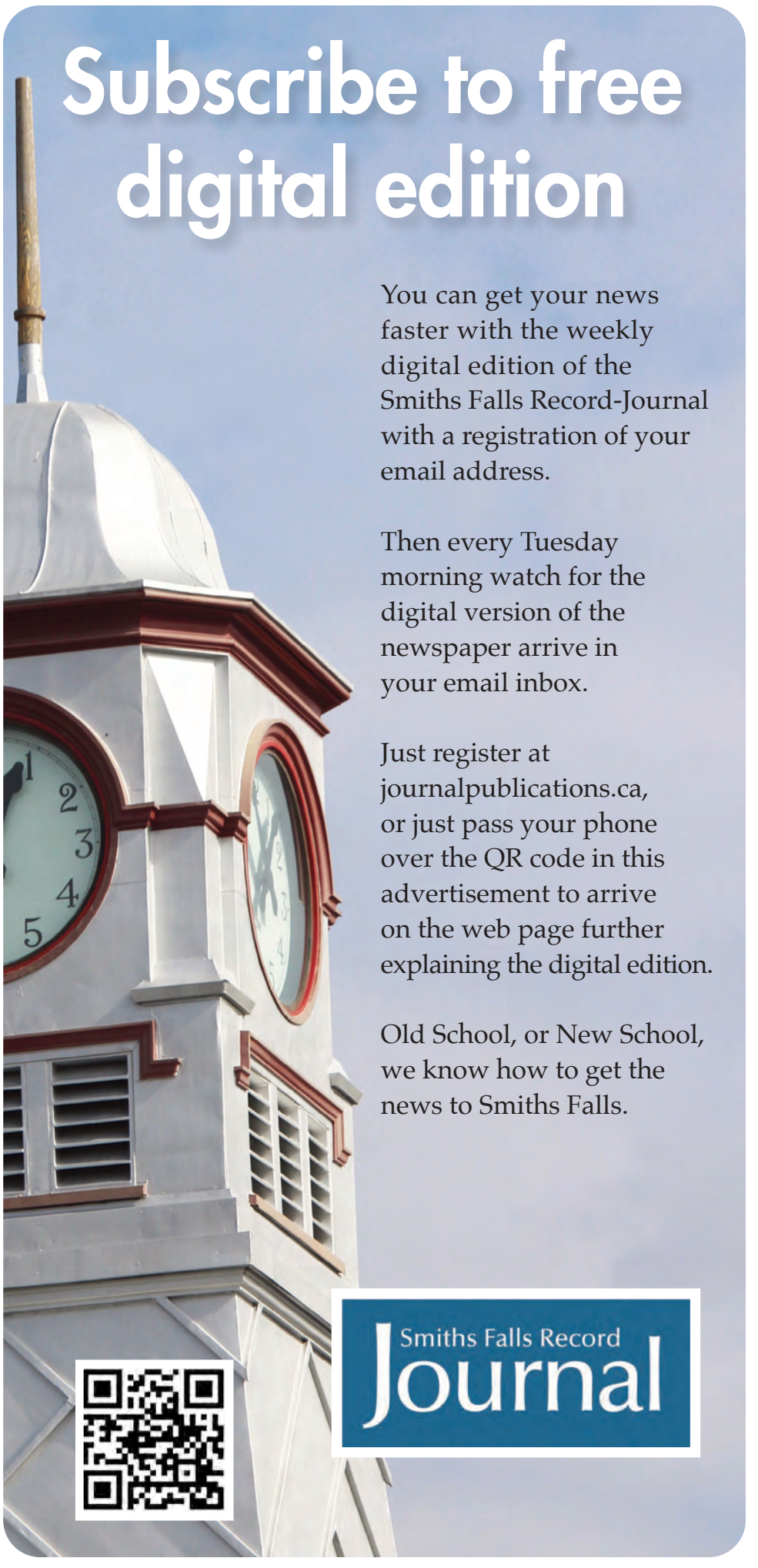
Saturday and Sunday will feature panels on non-fiction, fiction, romance, young adult literature, mystery and crime, fantasy and eco-literacy. Among those participating are Brenda Chapman, Katie Tallo, Kate Heartfield, Jennifer Whiteford and environmentalist and author Diana Beresford-Kroeger. Free community programming is also planned downtown.

The literary festival shares Sept. 19 with another unusual attraction. The Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario's Hallow's Express will transform the museum at 90 William St. W. into a wizard-inspired railway adventure. Visitors can board vintage railway equipment, receive an acceptance letter, take part in activities and explore the decorated station. The event is intended for all ages.

History gets a darker twist Sunday, Sept. 20 with the Hillcrest Cemetery Tour. Beginning at 1 p.m., the guided tour explores the oldest part of Hillcrest Cemetery and combines stories about early Smiths Falls residents with cemetery symbolism, traditions and superstitions. Pre-registration is required.

October then brings a full slate of autumn and Halloween programming. Fall Fest returns to Heritage House Museum Oct. 4 with wagon rides, scavenger hunts, a petting zoo, children's activities and a community pumpkin carving contest. A candlelit Museum Ghost Tour follows Oct. 8.

The Heritage House gets considerably spookier with Haunted Heritage House Oct. 16-17 and again Oct. 23-24. Downtown joins the Halloween fun Oct. 24 and 25 with The Falls Spooktacular, including Skele-Bration and the Smiths Falls Mystic Market.



Thousands of new houses are coming to Lanark County

The challenge will be for infrastructure to keep pace with the expansion

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN

Lanark County is entering what could be one of the largest periods of residential construction in its history, with major subdivisions advancing in Carleton Place, Almonte, Perth and Beckwith while smaller developments continue to spread through rural municipalities.

An examination of municipal planning documents, development applications and long-range growth forecasts suggests the county could support construction of roughly 450 to 550 new housing units annually over the next several years, although the actual number will depend on interest rates, servicing capacity, approvals and the pace at which developers release lots.

At that rate, somewhere in the neighbourhood of 2,250 to 2,750 homes could be built over five years, with considerably more already represented in the longer-term development pipeline.

The largest concentrations of growth are expected in Carleton Place and Mississippi Mills.

Carleton Place could see 1,600 houses in decade

Carleton Place has been one of Lanark County's fastest-growing communities, and its development pipeline remains substantial.

A Watson & Associates development charges study forecast 1,667 additional residential units in Carleton Place between 2024 and 2034, or an average of about 167 units per year. The same study found 1,868 units already represented in active residential development applications as of 2024.

Those applications included registered but unbuilt lots, draft-approved developments and projects still under review, meaning they should not be interpreted as homes guaranteed to be constructed.

More proposals have continued to emerge.

One current Carleton Place application calls for 35 street-fronting townhouses on Lewis Street, while another proposed project identified by the town would construct four three-storey apartment buildings containing 84 units.

There is also a proposed 20-unit apartment development among applications being reviewed by the town.

At the county level, the Meadow Ridge condominium application in Carleton Place remains open, although that proposal has been appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Another open application involves a subdivision and condominium project at 254 Lake Ave. W.

Carleton Place's federal Housing Accelerator Fund agreement provides another indication of where the town expects construction to go. The federal government is providing more than $5.6 million under an agreement intended to accelerate 168 homes over three years and help spur 934 homes over 10 years.

The town is also expanding its wastewater treatment infrastructure, an important prerequisite for continued residential growth.

Almonte building boom is on a tear

Mississippi Mills could rival Carleton Place for new-home construction.

Its Housing Accelerator Fund agreement sets a target of 414 permitted housing units over three years. The municipality is receiving approximately $3.3 million to speed approvals, make municipal land available for housing and allow a broader range of residential construction.

A 2025 Watson & Associates forecast goes considerably further.

It projects 1,627 new housing units in Mississippi Mills between mid-2025 and mid-2035, equivalent to an average of about 163 units annually. By 2051, the forecast anticipates approximately 4,213 additional housing units and a population approaching 24,900.

One of the most visible developments is Minto Communities' Weavers Way in Almonte.

Construction is underway and homeowners have already begun moving into the development. Minto is selling single-detached homes, bungalows and townhouses, with subsequent phases planned on lands extending between Old Almonte Road and Appleton Side Road.

The project was initially announced as a development of more than 200 homes, but longer-term plans have been reported at approximately 530 homes.

Other large Almonte-area applications remain in the approval pipeline.

Mississippi Mills lists Hannan Hills, Brown Lands and extensions to Mill Run among active subdivision applications. Mill Run's proposed phases seven and eight were resubmitted as recently as June 2026, indicating that considerable additional residential construction remains under review.

Perth could see major expansion

Perth's housing picture is potentially transformative.

The biggest proposed project remains the redevelopment of the former Perth Golf Course lands by Caivan.

An earlier version contemplated 939 homes — 640 single-detached houses and 299 townhouses — but the project has changed significantly during the approval and Ontario Land Tribunal process.

The latest settlement-related proposal presented publicly in 2026 is substantially smaller, at approximately 302 homes, including 92 single-detached houses and 168 townhouses, with other residential forms making up the balance.

The Caivan file remains subject to the Ontario Land Tribunal process. Perth says a settlement was approved in principle in fall 2025, with revised Official Plan, zoning, subdivision and draft-condition documents subsequently released.

Even 302 homes would be significant for a community the size of Perth.

Other developments are also moving through the system.

A project at 64-72 Cockburn Street proposes six townhouses with the potential for four additional residential units.

Another development proposed for 53 and 55 Craig Street would create approximately 30 residential units.

The town is simultaneously rewriting its zoning bylaw to accommodate new housing forms and additional residential units, potentially allowing more construction on existing residential properties rather than relying exclusively on greenfield subdivisions.

Perth's recent wastewater lagoon expansion is also expected to increase servicing capacity and remove one of the major constraints that previously limited future development.

Beckwith is a growth centre

Some of Lanark County's most interesting future development is occurring immediately outside Carleton Place.

The county currently lists four recent Beckwith subdivision applications: Mississippi Ridge, a development on 10th Line, the Santaguida subdivision and Douglas Landing.

Douglas Landing alone proposes 23 estate residential lots on McArton Road.

The number of active applications suggests Beckwith's growth will increasingly be tied to Carleton Place, particularly as residents seek larger properties while remaining within commuting distance of Ottawa.

That growth pattern also raises long-term questions about traffic on Highway 7 and local roads, groundwater and septic capacity, school enrolment and the cost of delivering municipal services to dispersed rural development.

Townships seeing high growth as well

New homes built through severances, individual rural lots, additional residential units and small projects in Drummond/North Elmsley, Tay Valley, Lanark Highlands and Montague will continue to add to the total.

Those projects are harder to count in advance because Lanark County notes that active severance applications are not included on its public subdivision application webpage.

Current subdivision applications include

Lanark County will see 450 to 550 new housing units annually

Easton's subdivision in Lanark Highlands and the Matheson and Rosedale development in Montague, adding further potential construction outside the county's urban centres.

What will actually be built?

The sheer size of the planning pipeline does not mean every proposed house will immediately appear.

There is a large distinction between a unit included in a subdivision application, a draft-approved lot, a building permit and an actual housing start.

Projects can remain in planning for years, developers can construct subdivisions in phases and changing mortgage rates or housing demand can cause builders to accelerate or delay construction.

Still, Lanark County's underlying growth forecasts point firmly upward.

The county's recent growth work estimates its population, excluding Smiths Falls, could reach between approximately 98,300 and 114,500 by 2051, compared with an estimated population slightly above 77,500 in 2024. Growth is expected to be concentrated primarily in Carleton Place, Mississippi Mills and Perth.

That translates into the need for thousands of additional homes.

Based on the municipal forecasts, active developments and historical building rates, a reasonable near-term scenario is 450 to 550 new homes per year county-wide.

That would produce roughly:

2026-2030: 2,250 to 2,750 new units

2026-2035: approximately 4,500 to 5,500 new units if the pace is sustained.

Those figures are a forecast rather than an official county target. Carleton Place and Mississippi Mills alone have planning forecasts equivalent to about 330 new units annually, before Perth, Beckwith, Montague, Lanark Highlands, Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley are included.

Infrastructure challenge

The greatest uncertainty may not be whether Lanark County will grow, but how quickly infrastructure can keep up, says a source close to the file.

Hundreds of additional homes each year mean additional pressure on wastewater plants, water systems, county and municipal roads, schools, recreation facilities, paramedic services and policing.

If even the middle of the forecast is reached — about 500 new homes annually — Lanark County could have roughly 2,500 additional homes by the end of 2030, fundamentally changing several of its fastest-growing communities.



Advance planning will be needed for schools, services, police, and infrastructure

Will focus on oversight and collaboration

Loomes enters Smiths Falls council race

Spring Loomes is seeking a seat on Smiths Falls council in the Oct. 26 municipal election, campaigning on stronger support for the downtown, preventative infrastructure spending, greater civilian oversight of policing and a more collaborative council.

Loomes, who grew up in Smiths Falls and the surrounding area, said she wants the town to build on the economic and community strengths it already has rather than lose momentum through political division.

"Smiths Falls has something other towns want: a downtown that draws people in, events that pack the streets, and a community that shows up for each other," Loomes said.

She said one of her priorities would be greater support for organizations involved in downtown events and cultural programming, including the Downtown Business Association and Arts and Culture Council.

Loomes argues that successful festivals, celebrations and other downtown activities are more than entertainment.

"Our downtown events aren't just fun — they're an economic engine," she said. "With stronger support for organizations like the DBA and the Arts and Culture Council, we can grow that revenue, bring even more visitors into our core, and ease the tax burden on residents."

Infrastructure maintenance is another major part of her platform.

Loomes said the town should focus on maintaining municipal assets before small problems become expensive repairs or replacement projects.

"I believe in taking care of what we already have," she said. "Maintaining our landmarks and town infrastructure now will cost a fraction of what it takes to fix them later — smart maintenance is smart budgeting."

She is also calling for changes to the way police services are overseen locally.

Loomes said she wants stronger and more independent civilian oversight, arguing that an oversight body should better reflect the community and include people without personal or professional connections to the police service.

She said greater diversity and independence would help strengthen public confidence in decision-making.

"I want a civilian oversight board with real diversity — people without a personal or professional stake in the department — so decisions are made with fresh eyes and the public's trust in mind," she said.

Loomes is also making council relations an issue in her campaign. She said Smiths Falls will be better positioned to deal with growth, affordability and infrastructure pressures if elected officials can work together even when they disagree.

"I believe we can build on what's already working here — with a council that pulls in the same direction instead of pulling apart," she said.

Work experience

Loomes brings more than 30 years of work experience in commercial cleaning, including assignments in workplaces requiring security clearances. Those environments have included children's aid facilities, museums, military sites and medical facilities.

Loomes also holds a Medical Office Administration certification and has worked as an office manager for a Canadian hoarding consultant. She also spent a year working as a nursing assistant.

Her volunteer and community experience includes involvement with Telehealth Ontario, Women's Entrepreneurs of Lanark Leeds and Grenville and the Rideau Heritage Route Tourism Association.

For Loomes, however, the campaign is also personal.

She grew up in the community, raised her children in the Smiths Falls area and now watches another generation of her family make its home there.

"I love this town. I grew up here. I raised my kids here. Now they're raising their kids here," she said.

Loomes said she wants to help ensure Smiths Falls continues to grow while remaining affordable and maintaining the community character that has kept generations of families in the area.

Voting day in the Smiths Falls municipal election is Monday, Oct. 26.

"I'd be honoured to earn your vote," Loomes said.

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Council candidate Spring Loomes

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Wed. Aug 19 – '**Trasna**' (6:00pm)
Wed. Aug 26 – '**Field Trip**' (6:00pm)
Wed. Sept 2 – '**umberlune**' (6:00pm); **Ompah Dom** (7:00pm)
Wed. Sept 9 – **Tim Loten** (6:00pm); **Peter Brown** (7:00pm)

In association with Perth Tourism. Contact: tunesonthetay@gmail.com

144347

Tay Valley Township

JOB POSTING
HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

Tay Valley Township is seeking a full-time Heavy Equipment Operator. Reporting to the Public Works Manager, the Heavy Equipment Operator will operate all heavy equipment as required to fulfill assigned duties including trucks, snow plows, back hoes, loaders and graders and will maintain roads in accordance with established standards, identify road related problems, conduct daily inspections and maintain equipment in a safe operating condition, perform general building and facility maintenance, respond to emergency situations, among other public works related duties. A detailed job description is available at www.tayvalleytwp.ca.

As the preferred candidate you will have exceptional customer service skills and have a solid understanding of safety rules and the use of personal protective equipment. The successful candidate will have working experience in a related area, be able to work with minimal supervision, and be willing to participate in training. Demonstrated experience working with the public is a requirement. You must possess excellent communication skills, strong time management and organizational skills, and a proficiency in English, written and spoken. A Class D driver's license with a "Z" endorsement is a requirement. Experience in a municipal environment would be considered an asset.

The wage range is $30.25 to $33.61 (2025 rates, under review) per hour, based on a 40-hour work week. A comprehensive benefit package is available to all employees.

Qualified candidates are invited to submit a covering letter and resume clearly marked **"Heavy Equipment Operator"**, prior to 9:00 a.m., September 3rd, 2026, to:

Tay Valley Township
Attn: Deputy Clerk
217 Harper Road
Perth, ON K7H 3C6
or e-mail: deputyclerk@tayvalleytwp.ca

Tay Valley Township is an equal opportunity employer, committed to ensuring all candidates are able to participate in the interview process fully and equally. If contacted for employment, please let us know if you require any accommodations to ensure you can participate fully and equally during the recruitment and selection process.

We thank all applicants for their interest and only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

Personal information collected from applications is collected under the authority of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and will be used to determine qualifications for employment. Questions about the collection of Information should be directed to the Clerk at the address indicated above.

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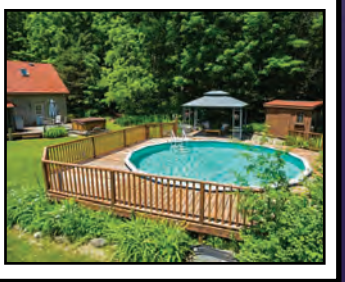


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Perth teen receives 10-years for murder of Reese Stanzel – Page 12

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Smiths Falls Record Journal



Demand on food bank is on the rise

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Music comes downtown on September 12 with 7 acts

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The Keepers Wildlife Rescue comes to the Smiths Falls Youth Arena on Sunday, Sept. 6. See the news story on page 9.

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Smiths Falls councillor launches bid for mayor

A veteran Smiths Falls councillor has officially entered the race for mayor, pointing to eight years on town council and a lifelong career in social services and community leadership as experience he hopes to bring to the municipality's top job.

The candidate said Smiths Falls has been his home throughout his life and career and that serving on council has given him the opportunity to work closely with residents and community organizations.

"I'm excited to officially announce my candidacy for Mayor of Smiths Falls in the upcoming municipal election," he said.

His campaign will focus heavily on community engagement, with plans to meet residents and hear their concerns and ideas ahead of the Oct. 26 municipal election.

The candidate said his involvement in the community stretches back to early advocacy for social housing and continued through a career focused on social services.

Kidney Walk set for Oct. 4 for Perth and Smiths Falls

The Perth-Smiths Falls Kidney Walk in support of The Kidney Foundation of Canada will take place Sunday, Oct. 4, bringing together participants from across the area to raise money and awareness for people affected by kidney disease.

The annual walk is part of a national fundraising effort supporting kidney patients, their families and programs offered through the foundation.

Participants are encouraged to collect pledges before the event, with funds helping finance research, education, advocacy and patient support services.

Kidney Walk events are also intended to give people living with kidney disease, transplant recipients, donors, caregivers and supporters an opportunity to connect and share their experiences.

Smiths Falls and Rideau Lakes discuss recreation cost-sharing

Negotiations are continuing over a new regional recreation cost-sharing agreement involving Smiths Falls, Rideau Lakes Township and other participating municipalities.

Stephanie Clark, Smiths Falls' director of community services, said the town received a formal request from Rideau Lakes in June seeking additional information and a one-year extension of the existing agreement, which expires at the end of 2026.

Clark said discussions on the next agreement are being conducted collectively with all municipalities that share and help fund Smiths Falls recreation facilities.

The facilities serve residents from Smiths Falls and surrounding municipalities, which contribute toward their operating costs.

"Each municipality, including Rideau Lakes, has representation at the negotiating table," Clark said, adding that the town has understood that information sharing, discussions and decisions would take place through the joint process rather than through separate negotiations with individual municipalities.

Clark said Smiths Falls has supplied the participating municipalities with audited financial information as well as facility usage data.

Election Profile

Chance Lauziere-Peterson wants to keep Smiths Falls moving 'forward'

Smiths Falls council candidate Chance Lauziere-Peterson says the town should continue building on recent economic momentum while ensuring that growth benefits the people already living in the community.

Running for a council seat in the Monday, Oct. 26 municipal election, Lauziere-Peterson has centred his campaign around one theme: keeping Smiths Falls moving "forward."

"We've seen a lot of change in Smiths Falls over the last several years, and I think we've built some real momentum," he said. "That doesn't mean every decision has been the right one, but I don't think it's time to take our foot off the gas either."

His platform focuses on five areas: economic development, affordability, community building, public safety and policing, and reviewing what is and is not working at town hall.

Lauziere-Peterson said Smiths Falls should continue attracting jobs, investment and responsible development while also supporting existing local businesses.

But he said growth must be measured against its impact on residents.

"Water bills matter. Housing matters," he said. "When we're making big decisions at Council, I think we need to keep asking: What does this mean for the person already living here?"

He also wants the town to pay greater attention to child care, recreation and access to health care as more younger families choose Smiths Falls.

While those services do not all fall directly under municipal control, Lauziere-Peterson said council can advocate, build partnerships and look for ways to attract needed services.

Community organizations are another focus.

"Sometimes the Town's job should simply be helping good people make good things happen," he said, pointing to local clubs, volunteers, events and businesses.



Chance Lauziere-Peterson

Public safety and policing will also be a major campaign issue.

Lauziere-Peterson has spent more than 10 years working in security and investigations and is the owner and operator of Pinnacle Security and Investigations. He previously worked in radio broadcasting and is a member of the local Royal Canadian Legion.

He said Smiths Falls needs an open discussion about policing costs, service, governance, accountability and public trust.

Lauziere-Peterson said he is not campaigning on the idea that everything at town hall is broken.

"I'm not running because I think everything is broken. I'm also not running because I think everything is perfect," he said.

His approach, he said, is to recognize what is working, fix what is not and keep building.

"I'm running to bring ideas to the Council table — not to pretend mine are the only ones that belong there."

Police report arrests in firearms, theft and assault investigations

Smiths Falls Police Service officers have made a series of arrests in recent weeks involving allegations ranging from firearms trafficking and assault to theft, drug possession and probation breaches.

In one of the more serious investigations, police executed a search warrant on July 23 as part of a firearms trafficking investigation led by the Smiths Falls Police Crime Unit.

A 27-year-old Smiths Falls man was arrested and charged with unauthorized possession of a prohibited or restricted firearm, trafficking in a firearm, knowledge of unauthorized possession of a firearm, being an occupant of a motor vehicle knowing a firearm was present and carrying a concealed weapon.

The accused was held in custody pending a bail hearing before the Ontario Court of Justice.



Police also arrested a 37-year-old man on Aug. 6 in connection with an intimate partner violence investigation.

Police said officers conducting proactive patrols located the wanted man without incident. The investigation stemmed from an alleged incident two days earlier, on Aug. 4.

The man was charged with one count of assault and held in custody pending a bail hearing.

In a separate case, police responded to a report of a theft at a local business on Aug. 6. Investigators reviewed security surveillance footage and identified a suspect.

Shawn Connors, 42, of Smiths Falls, was arrested Aug. 8 and charged with theft under $5,000. He was released from custody and is scheduled to appear in court at a later date.

Another arrest came Aug. 13 in connection with an investigation dating back to May 12, when police received reports that tools had been stolen from a vehicle.

Dennis Daye, 40, of Smiths Falls, was arrested while officers were conducting patrols.

He has been charged with possession of property obtained by crime under $5,000, possession of a credit card and failure to comply with a probation order.

Daye was released on conditions and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice at a later date.

The following day, Aug. 14, officers spotted another man who was wanted on an outstanding theft warrant.

Police said the man fled on foot when officers attempted to approach him. After a brief foot pursuit, officers arrested Mathew Dinelle-Dowdall, 31.

In addition to the outstanding matter, Dinelle-Dowdall was charged with obstructing a peace officer, possession of cocaine, failure to comply with a probation order and an offence under the Railway Safety Act.

He was held in custody pending a bail hearing. None of the charges has been proven in court.

Demand on food bank help is on the increase

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

The number of local residents requiring the services of the Smiths Falls Community Food Bank rose 16 percent in July compared to the previous month, according to the most recent figures provided by the local non-profit charitable organization.

The monthly stats for July on August 24, show a total of 970 visitors to its 93 Russell St. E. location – 14 of whom were new – compared to 835 visitors (also 14 new) in June.

The Food Bank also gave out a total of 20,028 lbs. of perishable and non-perishable food items in July – the approximate equivalent in weight of five 2025 Hyundai Santa Fe SUVs.

That represents an 11.4 increase over the 17,987 pounds allotted in June.

The total number of volunteer hours accrued by Food Bank personnel increased by 8.5 percent, from 352 in June to 382 in July.

Two categories showed a decline from June to July.

The total spent on food purchases for the Food Bank in July was $14,983.94, representing an 8.5 percent decrease over the $16,377.40 expenditure in June, while 4,089 lbs. of food donations were received in July, a 27 percent drop from July's total of 5,590 lbs.

Food emergency

In April 2025, Smiths Falls town council declared a food insecurity emergency in the town, with Mayor Shawn Pankow declaring that food bank usage among local residents had skyrocketed by nearly 200 percent since 2019 – more than twice the 90 percent increase reported by the Ottawa Food Bank over the same period.

At that time, Natalia Soteroff, the executive director of the Smiths Falls Community Food Bank, explained that the demand for the organization's service had grown tremendously since the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that the Food Bank used to serve an average of about 300 people per month, but that the figure had more than tripled over the last few years.

According to the annual Impact Report (for 2025/2026) released this past June by Feed Ontario – the province's largest collective of hunger-relief organizations, which works together with food banks, industry partners, and local communities in the fight against hunger and poverty – more than one million people in Ontario turned to food banks for help in the last year, visiting more than 8.7 million times.



September promises much entertainment – Page 15

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Publisher

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

Homelessness



PHOTO: David Leonardo

IN SAN FRANCISCO, an unsheltered patriot views a mega-yacht docked in front of him.

Homelessness is on the rise in Lanark County

Homelessness continues to rise in Lanark County, with local officials reporting a 37-per-cent increase between 2024 and 2025 — far above the Ontario-wide increase of 7.8 per cent.

Lanark County Social Services Director Emily Hollington told county council earlier this year that the number of households experiencing homelessness increased from 57 in January 2025 to 112 in January 2026.

The problem is concentrated largely in the county's urban communities. Carleton Place, Perth and Smiths Falls account for about 85 per cent of the county's homeless population, with Smiths Falls alone representing about 49 per cent of actively homeless people.

Officials stress that homelessness is not always visible. Couch surfing with friends or relatives remains one of the most common arrangements, followed by transitional housing and people living without shelter.

Since 2021, about 800 people have registered with the county's By-Name List, which tracks people experiencing homelessness and helps connect them with housing and support services.

The county provides emergency shelter assistance, transitional housing, rent subsidies, supportive housing and outreach services, including the Lanark Integrated Frontline Team.

County officials say affordable housing alone will not solve the problem, pointing to poverty, health issues, domestic violence and other factors contributing to homelessness.

The county is also developing an updated 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan aimed at improving access to stable and affordable housing.

Unsheltered

There is homeless and then there are the unsheltered who are in more dire circumstances. As a comparision, Canada counts about 27 per cent of people experiencing homelessness were unsheltered, while roughly 36 per cent of the U.S. homeless population was unsheltered in 2025.

In Lanark County, anyone who needs shelter needs only to ask.

OPP issues warning about fraudsters

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is warning the public about fraudsters posing as cellphone service providers and offering discounts, upgraded plans, or new devices. Warning signs include unsolicited calls, texts, or emails about special offers, requests for passwords, PINs, or verification codes, pressure to act quickly, requests for ID such as a driver's licence or SIN and instructions to send a newly delivered device to another address. To protect yourself, hang up and contact your provider directly using verified contact information, never share passwords, PINs, or authentication codes and verify offers before opening new accounts or accepting devices.

If you suspect fraud, contact your local police service and report it to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre at 1-888-495-8501 or online at http:// antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca.

Copper is heating up as a valuable Canadian product

3-minutes with
Peter Black
Columnist



The plumber was here the other day to patch a couple of tiny leaks in the pipes that, once the cold weather comes – and it will come – will be circulating hot water into the radiators to keep the house warm.

He patched the leaks with sleeves and elbows made of gleaming cooper, artfully soldered to the existing pipes. And so, with my typical David Byrne-like wonderment, I ask myself: "Where do those beautiful new copper fittings come from"?

The other big question, eh, is whether those copper pieces are Canadian.

The answer is, well, it's hard to know, and, as savvy as our plumber is, I doubt very much he would know either.

Canada does in fact manufacture copper plumbing pipes and fixtures. There are two plants in Ontario, both dating back to the 1950s, that churn out the fittings. But Canada, despite being a major copper producer, is a net importer of finished copper products.

Part of the reason for that – and this comes as a bit of an eye-opener – is there is but one copper smelter in Canada, and dare we say, a rather notorious one at that.

If you've traveled through Quebec's Abitibi-Témiscamingue region, chances are you have come across one of the province's industrial monuments – the humungous Horne smelter in Rouyn-Noranda. Rather hard to miss with its twin smokestacks, belching arsenic-flavoured emissions and providing thousands of jobs since 1927.

We need not go into the prolonged battle over the smelter's emissions and what actually constitutes a safe level of arsenic microbes. The long and short of it seems to be that if the smelter, owned by Swiss metals conglomerate Glencore, cannot meet the 2027 deadline to reduce levels to meet a certain standard, will it have to be shut down?

The smelter is not just the only copper anode producer in Canada, it is the largest recycler in North America of scrap copper. Glencore also has a copper refinery in Montreal, also the only such operation in Canada.

All other copper ore extracted from mines in Canada – 80 per cent in British Columbia – is shipped off as concentrate to other countries, with tariff-happy America being the largest customer. More often than not, foreign plants process Canadian copper, turn it into stuff and ship it back as pots, pans and pipe fittings.

Copper, some folks may have noticed, has suddenly become a super-hot commodity, with the world moving in fits and starts to electrification of vehicles, solar panels and anything that requires wiring and circuits. Being the second best conductor of electricity – silver is first, gold is third – copper is the obviously more affordable choice for the manufacture of electrical gizmos.

Canada's copper output has actually decreased in recent years, but bolstered by the federal government's national major projects drive, two major copper projects promise to turn that around.

One is the McIlvenna Bay Foran mine project in the Saskatchewan outback, a new site that "is expected to be the first net-zero copper project in Canada." The ore would be shipped for smelting to that problematic Horne plant in Quebec.

The other is the Red Chris Mine expansion in the northwest interior of British Columbia - incidentally, damn, is this a big country, or what? The expansion would prolong the life of the mine by at least a decade and reduce greenhouse emissions by 70 per cent.

A subplot to all this activity in Canada's copper industry was the move by Britain-based Anglo-American to acquire Teck Resources, one of the few remaining major Canadian-owned mining companies.

Anglo made a successful bid of CAD $69-billon for the company which has a copper mine in B.C., but even more desirable for its suitor, major interests in copper deposits in Chile and Peru.

The federal government made the acquisition subject to conditions such as having its head office in Canada, a majority Canadian board, and renaming the company Anglo-Teck.

Quebec mining legend Pierre Lassonde called the potential take-over "a tragedy for the Canadian industry." Lassonde, incidentally, made an unsuccessful bid years ago for Teck's coal operations in Canada, ultimately acquired by, guess who? – Glencore.

Frankly, I'm sure our plumber could care less.

OPP is warning of cellphone service provider scam now under way

The Ontario Provincial Police is warning residents across Eastern Ontario about a cellphone service provider scam that can leave victims responsible for expensive devices and new account charges.

Police say fraudsters are contacting people while posing as representatives of legitimate cellphone companies and offering discounts, upgraded plans or new devices.

The caller may attempt to build trust before asking the victim to log in to an existing cellphone account while remaining on the line. From there, the fraudster may request account information, passwords, PINs, security codes or multi-factor authentication codes.

In other cases, victims are persuaded to open an account with another service provider and order a cellphone or tablet.

To complete the transaction, scammers may ask for personal identification, including a driver's licence or Social Insurance Number.

Once the device arrives, the fraudster tells the victim that the wrong item was shipped and directs them to send it to another address.

Police say victims can then be left responsible for the price of the device and other charges connected to the account.

The OPP says several warning signs can help consumers recognize the scam.

Residents should be cautious of unsolicited calls, texts or emails offering unusually attractive cellphone deals, particularly when the caller pressures them to act quickly.

Other red flags include being asked to log into an account while the caller remains on the phone, provide passwords or verification codes, open an account with another provider, or ship a device to an unfamiliar address.

Police advise anyone receiving an unexpected call from someone claiming to represent a cellphone company to hang up and contact the provider directly using a telephone number from a bill, account documentation or the company's official website.

Consumers should never provide passwords, PINs, security codes or multi-factor authentication codes to an unsolicited caller.

Fraud can also be reported to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre through its online Fraud Reporting System or by calling 1-888-495-8501.

SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

TOWN OF SMITHS FALLS
NOTICE OF ELECTION INFORMATION
Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (s. 40)

Municipal Elections for the offices of:

OFFICE	CANDIDATE (Listed in Alphabetical Order)	QUALIFYING ADDRESS
Mayor (1 to be elected)	CUMMINGS, Christopher G.	211 Brockville St
	MCKENNA, Peter	116 Queen St
	MORRIS, Nate	22 Daniel St
Councillor (6 to be elected)	BROWN, Alex	57 McCann St
	CREIGHTON, James	39 Strathcona St
	DICKSON, Bill	71 Abel St
	GUERIN, Marie-Pier	20 Elm St W
	HULL, Greg	22 Catherine St
	KOLUK, Lewis	A-34 Main St E
	LOOMES, Spring	67 Elmsley St N
	MCGUIRE, Christopher	15 McEwen Ave
	MILLER, Jennifer	36-38 William St E
	PETERSON, Chance	33 Lavinia St
	QUINN, Dawn	58 Elmsley St S
	RICHARDSON, Leslie Allison	10 Foster Ave
	ROBINSON, Stephen	24 Strathcona St
	THOMS, Zachary	40 Gladstone Ave
	TYE-BERNICKY, Peggy Lee	60 Aberdeen Ave

OFFICE	SCHOOL BOARD	NAME(S)
English Public	UPPER CANADA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD	SCHOULAR, Jamie KOREN, Gal
English Separate	CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF EASTERN ONTARIO	JOSEPH, Jomol LALONDE PANKOW, Theresa
French Public	LE CONSEIL DES ÉCOLES PUBLIQUE DE L'EST DE L'ONTARIO	ROBERT, Patrick MOHAMED, Anab Yussuf
French Separate	LE CONSEIL DES ÉCOLES CATHOLIQUES DE LANGUE FRANÇAISE DU CENTRE-EST	BURNS, Diane **ACCLAIMED**

144440

- Location of Revision and Help Centre: Municipal Complex, 77 Beckwith Street North, Smiths Falls
- Voting Period: October 19th, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. through to October 26th, 2026 at 8:00 p.m.

Smiths Falls will be utilizing internet and telephone voting only for the 2026 Municipal Election.

Kerry Costello
Clerk / Returning Officer

Dated at Smiths Falls this 24th day of August 2026

Eastern Ontario Cell Gap Project reaches coverage targets as the final towers near completion

9-1-1 calls now get through almost everywhere

A major effort to improve cellular service across rural eastern Ontario has reached its coverage targets, although work on the $300-million project will continue through the end of the year.

Partners in the Eastern Ontario Regional Network's Cell Gap Project announced Aug. 20 that the initiative had achieved its major objectives, with the remaining new towers expected to enter service by December.

EORN chief executive officer Jason St. Pierre said two additional towers were connected to the electrical grid Tuesday, with several more expected to come online over the next month.

The final two towers, one in northwestern Hastings County and another in Haliburton County, are expected to be operating sometime in December.

First proposed more than a decade ago, the Cell Gap Project was designed to address long-standing gaps in reliable mobile service throughout rural eastern Ontario. The contract was awarded in 2021 to Rogers Communications Inc.

The project represents an investment of approximately $300 million. The federal and Ontario governments each contributed $71 million, eastern Ontario municipalities provided $10 million and Rogers committed approximately $150 million.

When completed, the network will include 257 new cellular towers, 311 upgraded sites and more than 80 locations where new equipment was installed on towers owned by other organizations through a process known as co-location. The improvements include sites across Lanark County.

EORN established three major coverage goals: reliable cellular coverage across 99 per cent of areas where people live, work and travel; service capable of streaming standard-definition video across 95 per cent of those areas; and enough capacity to stream high-adefinition video across 85 per cent.

"We will meet our objectives," St. Pierre said in a telephone interview.

"Based on the data we've seen so far, we'll actually exceed those targets."

He said between 96 and 97 per cent of the region currently has voice-calling coverage and the organization expects that figure to exceed 99 per cent once remaining work is completed.

While the project has dramatically expanded cellular coverage, there are limitations.

Because Rogers won the competitive procurement process, customers of Rogers and its affiliated brands, including Fido and Chatr, will generally see the greatest improvement in everyday service.

Customers of competing carriers may not receive regular cellular service from the new equipment, but St. Pierre said they should have improved access to 911 emergency calling in locations where no signal was previously available.

"From an emergency-services perspective, we're in a great spot," he said.

EORN has heard reports from firefighters who are now receiving emergency calls from areas where cellular service was previously unavailable.

Some dead zones are expected to remain, even for Rogers customers. St. Pierre said the project was designed to improve coverage across broad geographic areas rather than guarantee service at every home or property.

Eastern Ontario's terrain also creates challenges. Rock formations, dense trees, valleys and low-lying areas can interfere with signals.

In some locations, St. Pierre said, "I'm not even sure higher towers" would completely eliminate the gaps.

The project is finishing approximately a year later than originally anticipated.

St. Pierre said Rogers had relatively limited experience working in some of eastern Ontario's smaller rural municipalities when the project began.

EORN also added 13 months to the schedule after the Ontario government requested its assistance with required consultations involving Indigenous communities.

Additional delays

Additional delays arose from municipal and public objections involving tower locations, land-use authority, 5G technology and concerns about the visual impact of towers near lakes and scenic areas.

There are currently no plans for another broad EORN initiative targeting the remaining cellular gaps, although the organization has applied for CRTC funding for additional towers in Renfrew County.

Other telecommunications providers could also eventually install their equipment on the new towers, potentially extending improved service to more customers.

"The Cell Gap Project represents one of the most significant investments in rural wireless infrastructure in Ontario's history," EORN chair Jennifer Murphy said.

"This project is about more than towers and technology, it's about improving public safety, supporting economic growth and ensuring our communities are better connected for generations to come."



JUST ANOTHER day for a telecommunications worker as he scales a tower.

Four trustees acclaimed

Upper Canada District School Board election races taking shape

BY PHILLIP BLANCHER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter



The Upper Canada District School Board is guaranteed to see one new face at the trustee level, as local resident Scott Corden was acclaimed to be the Ward 7, Dundas County trustee.

Cordon, a retired teacher and principal with the UCDSB, filed his nomination papers late last week in South Dundas. He was the second candidate for the position, with current North Dundas councillor John Lennox having filed his nomination papers early during the nomination period. Lennox withdrew his nomination before the August 21 2 p.m. deadline. Cordon said he is looking forward to the challenge of being a trustee.

"The role has changed, and is changing. Who knows where the government is going to go with this," Cordon noted. "One of the things that has concerned me over the last few years was we did not have local representation."

Former trustee Larry Berry was acclaimed to Dundas County for a second term in 2022 but resigned early in his mandate due to health reasons. Since then, Dundas County was represented by former Ward 9 Stormont-Glengarry trustee John Danaher.

"Local schools need to have local representation," Cordon said.

Retired from the UCDSB, Cordon was a Hockey Canada certified minor hockey referee for 10 years, and a former assistant returning officer for Elections Canada. He remains co-chair of the group 100 Men Who Care About South Dundas, and serves on the board of the Roy McMurtry Legal Clinic in Cornwall and SDG. He added that even with the role of trustee changing recently, it still is important.

"It's important to ensure the government funds education properly, and that the board allocates that properly," he said. "That includes things like student mental health and well being, and student success," Cordon explained. In the latter part of his career at the board he worked on student success initiatives for the UCDSB and for Eastern Ontario/Ottawa for the Ministry of Education. "I bring some experience and local knowledge to the table. We'll see where that goes," he said.

Cordon is one of four trustees who were acclaimed Friday, and the only new trustee so far, but there will be at least three more new people at the UCDSB after the October 26 trustee election.

Ward 1 (Eastern Lanark) trustee Lynda Johnston, Ward 2 (Western Lanark) Elizabeth Steinberg, and Ward 9 (Stormont-Glengarry) trustee John Danaher were acclaimed, although to the ward in which they currently serve.

Current UCDSB chair Jamie Schoular faces a challenger in Ward 3 (North Leeds/Smiths Falls) with Gal Koran. Incumbent Ward 4 (Southwestern Leeds) trustee John McAllister is being challenged by Christorpher Buczynski.

Current Ward 5 (Brockville/Augusta) trustee Michel Labonté is being challenged by Jodie Craig. Former trustee John McCrae is running again, this time in Ward 6 (Grenville), where he faces Andrew Shamnks and Lindsey Ross.

In Ward 8 (Cornwall), Dylan Johnston, Ryan MacKay, and Katherine Vrastrak are vying for the trustee spot. And in Ward 10 (Prescott-Russell), James Vorobey and Tara Burton-Maclaren are seeking the job.

Voters in school board elections, where applicable, will cast their ballots on October 26.

Ontario rental rules tighten Sept. 21 — *faster evictions*

Ontario landlords will gain faster access to the eviction process for unpaid rent beginning Sept. 21, while tenants will face new requirements in disputes before the Landlord and Tenant Board.

The changes are part of amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act being phased in by the province. Some provisions took effect July 1, with another round coming into force this month.

One of the biggest changes involves unpaid rent.

Currently, monthly or yearly tenants who receive an N4 notice generally have 14 days to pay overdue rent before a landlord can file an L1 application seeking eviction and repayment.

As of Sept. 21, that deadline will fall to seven days.

The province is also setting a clearer threshold for persistent late payment. Tenants who pay rent more than seven days late on three occasions within a six-month period may be considered persistently late, allowing a landlord to serve an N8 notice and begin the eviction process.

Rules for landlord-use evictions are also changing.

Landlords using an N12 notice because they, an eligible family member or a purchaser plan to move into a unit currently must provide at least 60 days' notice and compensation equal to one month's rent.

Beginning Sept. 21, that compensation will no longer be required when at least 120 days' notice is given.

Bad-faith evictions

The province is also tightening rules aimed at preventing bad-faith evictions. The person named in the N12 notice will generally be required to move into the unit within 60 days of the tenant leaving. Failure to do so could result in compensation orders or fines.

Tenants facing an L1 nonpayment application will also see new rules.

To raise issues such as poor maintenance, illegal entry or harassment at an LTB hearing, tenants will generally be required to pay at least 50 per cent of the claimed arrears at least seven days before the hearing.

New requirements are also coming for so-called renovictions.

Landlords using an N13 notice for demolition or major renovations must continue to provide at least 120 days' notice, but will also have to keep tenants informed about the work.

That includes providing an estimated completion date, advising tenants of changes to the schedule and notifying them when the unit is ready.

Landlords who fail to provide the required updates could face compensation claims before the LTB.

The changes do not eliminate the LTB's role in eviction cases, but they significantly alter the timelines and procedures tenants and landlords must follow.

Wildlife rescue brings free family event on Sept. 6th to a Smiths Falls arena

Families will have a chance to get up close with wildlife, learn about conservation and enjoy live entertainment when The Keepers Wildlife Rescue comes to the Smiths Falls Youth Arena on Sunday, Sept. 6.

Hosted by the Town of Smiths Falls Community Services Department, the free event will feature live animal displays, educational presentations, demonstrations and animal meet-and-greet opportunities throughout the day.

Organizers say the event is designed to combine entertainment with education, giving children and adults an opportunity to learn more about animals, their habitats and wildlife conservation.

The day will also include dinosaur-themed activities and appearances by three larger-than-life characters — Bee the Transformer, Duke the Dino and Rescue Pup.

Three wildlife shows are scheduled.

The first, beginning at noon, will be a sensory-friendly presentation intended for guests who may benefit from a quieter environment and reduced sensory stimulation.

Full lights-and-sound presentations will follow at 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., offering higher-energy versions of the wildlife show.

Between presentations, visitors will be able to explore the animal displays, meet some of the animal ambassadors and take part in the character meet-and-greets.

"We're thrilled to bring The Keepers Wildlife Rescue to Smiths Falls for a day that combines education, entertainment and hands-on experiences," said Stephanie Clark, the town's director of community services.

"It's a fantastic opportunity for families to discover more about wildlife and conservation while enjoying an exciting show and meeting some very special animal ambassadors."

Clark said the variety of activities planned throughout the day should provide something for visitors of different ages and interests.

The event is part of the town's effort to provide family-oriented community programming while making educational activities accessible without an admission charge.

The Keepers Wildlife Rescue event takes place Sunday, Sept. 6, at the Smiths Falls Youth Arena.

Admission is free.

Showtimes are noon for the sensory-friendly presentation and 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. for the full lights-and-sound shows.



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One-Eye Dogs
Spencer Scharf
DaNielle Hewitt
Ambre McLean
The Trews

Downtown Music Festival

Music comes downtown on September 12 with 7 acts

Downtown Smiths Falls will become an outdoor concert venue Saturday, Sept. 12, as the Downtown Music Festival returns for its second year with seven acts performing during a full day of live music.

Canadian rock veterans The Trews will headline the festival, which is being organized by the Downtown Smiths Falls Business Association and will be divided between a free, all-ages afternoon program on Russell Street East and a ticketed 19-plus evening show at Millar Brooke Place on Main Street West.

The afternoon begins at 1 p.m. with singer-songwriter Ambre McLean, followed by Ottawa-area multi-instrumentalist Spencer Scharf at 1:45 p.m., Smiths Falls singer and guitarist DaNielle Hewitt at 2:15 p.m. and young country-rock performer Landon Bedor at 3:30 p.m.

The mix gives the festival a strong regional flavour.

McLean has spent two decades on Canada's indie and folk circuit and is known for building layered performances using multiple instruments and a loop pedal. Scharf combines folk, blues and rock while playing instruments ranging from guitar and banjo to mandolin and harmonica.

Hewitt, meanwhile, is a Smiths Falls performer who uses seven-string guitar, looping and percussion to build a full-band sound on stage. Bedor is a 19-year-old singer, songwriter and producer whose music combines country influences with rock.

The free afternoon program is intended to do more than provide entertainment. By putting music directly on Russell Street, organizers hope concertgoers will also visit downtown restaurants, stores and other businesses.

“Downtown Smiths Falls has always had an incredible live music scene that is an important part of the fabric of our downtown and really showcases what we have to offer,” DSFBA chair Sheri Axford said in announcing the festival. “We're excited to continue building on that in 2026.”

The focus shifts to Millar Brooke Place, 21 Main St. W., later in the day for the ticketed portion of the festival.

Smiths Falls rock band One Eyed Dawgs and Ottawa Valley folk-rock singer-songwriter Vicki Brittle will open the evening before The Trews take over the stage. The evening performances are restricted to those 19 and older.

The One Eyed Dawgs formed in 2022 and perform classic rock favourites by groups including The Rolling Stones, The Black Crowes and Simple Minds. Brittle has appeared at Ottawa Bluesfest, CityFolk and the Festival of Small Halls and released her second full-length album, The Hardest Things, in 2025.

Major draw

But the major draw will be The Trews.

The Canadian rock band has accumulated 20 Top 10 Canadian rock radio singles, including three No. 1 songs, along with Gold and Platinum releases and multiple JUNO nominations. During more than two decades on the road, the group has shared stages with The Rolling Stones, Bruce Springsteen, Aerosmith, KISS, Robert Plant, Guns N' Roses and other major international acts.

The Smiths Falls concert also comes less than a year after the release of The Bloody Light, The Trews' eighth full-length studio album, which arrived Oct. 24, 2025. The band subsequently launched a Canadian tour supporting the record through 2025 and 2026.

For the downtown business association, combining nationally recognized performers with free local entertainment is designed to turn the festival into both a community celebration and an attraction capable of drawing visitors from outside Smiths Falls.

The Town of Smiths Falls lists the Downtown Music Festival among its major confirmed arts and cultural events for 2026.

Tickets for the evening performances are on sale through the Downtown Smiths Falls website. The Russell Street East performances remain free and open to all ages.

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Judge gets emotional

Perth teen receives 10-years for murder of Reese Stanzel

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN

A teenager who pleaded guilty to the first-degree murder of 15-year-old Reese Stanzel has been handed the maximum youth sentence available under Canadian law, bringing one of Perth's most disturbing criminal cases closer to an end.

Justice Brian Abrams delivered his decision Thursday, Aug. 27, at the Perth courthouse, imposing a 10-year youth sentence involving secure custody and community supervision.

Abrams described Stanzel's death as senseless, tragic and irreversible and spoke at length about the devastating impact the killing has had on his parents, friends and the Perth community.

The accused, whose identity is protected under the Youth Criminal Justice Act because she was 16 at the time of the killing, pleaded guilty to first-degree murder in November 2025.

Stanzel was killed on Oct. 25, 2024.

Ontario Provincial Police were called shortly after 3 p.m. to the area of Sherbrooke Street East and Herriott Street in Perth. His body was discovered in a wooded area near the railway tracks.

First-degree murder

The accused was arrested at a nearby residence. She was initially charged with second-degree murder, but following further investigation the charge was upgraded to first-degree murder.

An agreed statement of facts presented in court said the teenager had formed a plan to kill Stanzel and led him into the wooded area. He was struck with a baseball bat and stabbed with a hunting knife.

The Crown and defence ultimately recommended the maximum 10-year youth sentence for first-degree murder.

The sentence provides for five years in secure custody, with one year deducted to account for the lengthy period the teenager has already spent detained, followed by four years of community supervision. At the July sentencing submissions, the accused had already spent 641 days in custody.

Abrams told the courtroom that he had reservations about the teenager's rehabilitation but was constrained by the legal principles governing a joint sentencing recommendation.

The judge became emotional while addressing Stanzel's family and said the case had weighed on him more heavily than any other during his 16 years on the bench. He described the grief experienced by Stanzel's parents and friends as staggering.

The teenager also addressed Stanzel's parents directly in court and apologized.

Evidence presented during the lengthy sentencing process included an assessment by court-appointed forensic psychiatrist Dr. Bradley Booth. Booth testified that, despite significant psychological and emotional problems identified in his assessment, he considered the teenager to be at a low risk of committing another offence.

The case at one point raised the possibility of a much more severe punishment. The Crown had previously indicated it would seek an adult sentence. An adult convicted of first-degree murder faces an automatic life sentence, although a person who committed the offence at age 16 or 17 may become eligible to seek parole after 10 years.

Instead, the case concluded with a youth sentence, for which the Youth Criminal Justice Act sets a maximum of 10 years for first-degree murder.

Outside the courthouse following Thursday's decision, Stanzel's mother expressed anger and disappointment with the result, saying she believed prosecutors should have pursued an adult sentence more forcefully.

Murder impacted

The murder and the court proceedings have had a profound impact on Perth, particularly among young people who knew Stanzel.

Ahead of sentencing, the Perth and District Union Public Library's Community Safety Working Group urged residents to seek help if the case renewed feelings of grief, anger or anxiety and encouraged parents to speak openly with young people affected by the tragedy.

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144458

Discussions centered on millions of dollars of grants and investments being made

More than 320 municipalities met at the AMO conference

Ontario ministers and parliamentary assistants recently met with over 320 municipalities including those in Lanark County and held nearly 800 meetings with municipal officials at the annual Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) conference in Ottawa. AMO represents over 400 Ontario municipalities.

The association's members appointed Ottawa city councillor Riley Brockington as its president, succeeding Westport Mayor Robin Jones in the role. Brockington had previously spent eight years on the association's board of directors. He will serve a two-year term as president.

During the four-day event, the province furthered its record investments in municipal and community infrastructure, including the following new measures that will strengthen communities, build more homes, improve access to critical services and create thousands of good-paying jobs:

Ontario and Canada are investing $1 billion to help municipalities that do not levy development charges build more homes. The new Non-Development Charge Municipalities Stream (Non-DC Stream) of the Canada-Ontario Partnership to Build will help municipalities build and renew housing-enabling infrastructure such as roads, bridges and water systems, with applications opening October 29th, 2026.

Ontario has opened applications for the next intake of the province's $500 million Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF), with this intake valued at $100 million. The government's investment through CSRIF is promoting active, healthy living, building stronger communities and giving the next generation of Ontario athletes a place to train and grow their skills.

In September, Ontario is launching the next call for proposals to create or expand approximately 78 primary care teams that will connect 600,000 more people to a family doctor or primary care provider. This $250 million investment is part of the government's $3.4 billion Primary Care Action Plan and brings the province one (1) step closer to connecting everyone in Ontario to primary care by 2029.

Ontario is investing over $1 billion in land ambulance funding, representing an average increase of nine (9) percent over 2025. Ontario is also continuing to strengthen public health units by providing one (1) percent growth base funding for 2027. Since 2018, provincial funding to public health units for public health programs and services has increased by approximately 24 percent.

As she departs from the post

Westport Mayor Robin Jones reflects on AMO presidency

Westport Mayor Robin Jones is looking back on her term as president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, highlighting efforts to give municipal leaders a broader understanding of communities across the province.

Jones said one of the most meaningful moments of her presidency came during the AMO Board's annual June retreat, which she hosted in Thunder Bay.

For many board members, it was their first visit to Northern Ontario.

Jones said that experience was important because AMO board members are regularly called on to make decisions affecting municipalities across Ontario, even though some have had limited firsthand exposure to the North.

"There is simply no substitute for seeing it in person," Jones said.

As part of the retreat, board members took part in a "Northern Experience" that included visits to Alstom, where GO Transit rail cars are refurbished, Smart Modular Canada, which manufactures housing in a controlled environment, and the Port of Thunder Bay.

Jones said the stops showcased the innovation, economic strength and ingenuity found across Northern Ontario while also demonstrating why provincial policies must take regional differences into account.

The board also visited the Terry Fox Memorial and Kakabeka Falls.

Jones thanked the City of Thunder Bay and the Northern Ontario Municipal Association for helping organize the retreat, saying she believed board members returned home with a greater appreciation of Northern Ontario and a broader perspective on municipal issues.

Her term as AMO president has now ended, with Ottawa city councillor Riley Brockington succeeding her as president of the organization.

Jones is also preparing to leave municipal politics in Westport.

She is retiring from the mayor's office rather than seeking another term in the Oct. 26 municipal election.

With Jones stepping aside, Coun. Joe Argona is set to be acclaimed as Westport's next mayor, bringing an end to Jones's tenure at the head of both the village and, more recently, Ontario's largest municipal advocacy organization.



Westport mayor Robin Jones

Your Health

Doctors now believe that loneliness can kill you

Loneliness is linked to a higher risk of cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, obesity, and other chronic conditions, partly due to stress-related hormonal changes that impair bodily systems.

Loneliness also affects mental health, leading to depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline. It is important to distinguish between loneliness, the subjective feeling of being disconnected, and social isolation, having few social contacts. A person can feel lonely even when surrounded by others, and conversely, someone may be socially isolated but still feel happy and fulfilled.

If you are feeling lonely, there are several things you can do. Strengthen your social connections: engage with friends, family, or community groups. Do volunteer work or join clubs: participating in shared activities allows you to meet people and foster meaningful relationships. Engage in physical activity, especially in group settings: take yoga classes or join a walking club. Exercising with others will improve both your social and your physical health. Therapy or counseling can help manage feelings of loneliness and improve coping strategies.

Finally, use technology wisely: use social media to supplement your in-person interactions, not replace them.



Are morning habits destroying your gut health?

Never skip having a breakfast

A healthy gut is crucial for overall well-being, and the choices you make in the morning can make a big impact on gut health. Gastroenterologists say there are some morning habits that could be working against your gut health.

Regularly ignoring bowel movement urges to go causes a cascade of effects that lead to constipation, stomach discomfort and changes to the gut microbiome.

Constipation slows or disrupts intestinal motility and alters the gut microbiome, which can negatively impact digestive health. Research links constipation with reduced levels of beneficial bacteria, lower microbial diversity and changes in microbes involved in intestinal secretion, sensation and motility.

Skipping breakfast is another morning habit that can negatively impact the gut. While getting breakfast on the table may seem challenging on hectic mornings, even just eating something on the go can be better for your gut than waiting until lunch.

One study found that skipping breakfast was associated with changes to the gut microbiome and increased inflammation.

However, breakfast should not consist of ultra-processed foods such as sugary cereals, processed meats and refined carbohydrates.

Ultra-processed foods generally contain saturated fat, added sugar and certain additives that may reduce microbial diversity and increase levels of pro-inflammatory compounds in the gut. Diets high in ultra-processed foods are associated with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), colorectal cancer and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

What do A1c levels mean?

Your healthcare provider may order an A1c test, which has been described as a blood sugar "report card". Instead of showing what your blood sugar is at one specific moment, your A1c test measures your average blood sugar over the past two to three months. The test works by measuring how much glucose has "stuck" to your red blood cells. Because red blood cells live for about three months, the percentage of sugar attached to them provides a snapshot of your average blood sugar during that timeframe. Healthcare providers commonly use A1c to screen for and diagnose prediabetes and diabetes.

Consistently elevated blood sugar can impact your long-term health. Over time, high blood sugar can damage blood vessels and nerves throughout the body, which can increase the risk of complications affecting the heart, kidneys, eyes and nervous system. If your blood sugar level is high, there are several ways to lower it. Cut back on high-sugar drinks and replace them with plain water or unsweetened tea. When you buy groceries, check the nutrition facts label for added sugars. Diabetes Canada says that Canadians eat an estimated 110 grams of sugar every day, while it recommends limiting added sugar to 50 grams or less per day. Exercise is crucial. Even a short walk can make a difference. Research has found that breaking up sitting time with brief periods of light walking improves post-meal blood sugar compared with remaining seated. Start with what feels manageable, even if it's only 5 to 10 minutes, and build from there.

September promises much entertainment

September is shaping up to be a busy month from rock concerts and wildlife encounters to literary events, blacksmith demonstrations and an old-fashioned harvest celebration.

Sept. 6 — Wildlife takes over the arena: Families can get an up-close look at wildlife when The Keepers Wildlife Rescue comes to the Smiths Falls Youth Arena on Sunday, Sept. 6.

Admission is free and three presentations are planned: a sensory-friendly show at noon, followed by full lights-and-sound shows at 2 and 4 p.m. The day will also feature live animal displays, educational presentations, animal meet-and-greets and dinosaur-themed activities. Youngsters can also meet Bee the Transformer, Duke the Dino and Rescue Pup. See a story on this item elsewhere in the newspaper.

Sept. 11 — Ghosts return downtown: Smiths Falls' Downtown Ghost Walks return Friday, Sept. 11, offering another opportunity to explore the darker side of the town's history. Sept. 11 is the final scheduled downtown ghost walk of the 2026 season.

Sept. 11-13 — Music and eco-art at No.9 Gardens: In Rideau Lakes, Cloud 9 Music & Eco-Art Festival takes over No.9 Gardens, 1516 Summers Rd., near Lyndhurst, from Sept. 11 to 13.

The three-day gathering combines electronic music, outdoor art, wellness and environmental programming. Performers include Loukeman, Amelia Holt, Lis Dalton, LukeAnthonyBarry and the Pucker Up! Collective. Organizers describe the event as part music festival, part outdoor retreat and part creative laboratory, with workshops, communal meals, wellness activities and immersive art mixed into the weekend.

Sept. 12 — The Trews headline Smiths Falls: One of the biggest concerts of the fall arrives Saturday, Sept. 12, when The Trews headline the Downtown Smiths Falls Music Festival.

The afternoon portion on Russell Street East is free and open to all ages, with Ambre McLean, Spencer Scharf, DaNielle Hewitt and Landon Bedor scheduled to perform.

The music then moves to the Millar Brooke Place stage on Main Street West for a ticketed 19-plus evening featuring the One Eyed Dawgs, Vicki Brittle and The Trews.

Sept. 12 — Montague firefighters fire up the barbecue: Montague residents can make Sept. 12 a dinner outing as the Montague Fire Department holds its Famous BBQ Dinner at Montague Centennial Hall.

Firefighters will serve beef and pork pit barbecue from 5 to 7 p.m. Tickets are $20, while children 12 and under eat free. The evening is billed as a chance to enjoy dinner while supporting and socializing with the local fire department.

Sept. 12-13 — Blacksmithing in Delta: There will be plenty of sparks flying in Delta during a weekend of traditional blacksmithing at the Old Stone Mill National Historic Site.

On Saturday, Sept. 12, blacksmith François Racine is scheduled to demonstrate techniques at the Delta Mill blacksmith shop. Sebastian Drygas follows with another demonstration Sunday, Sept. 13, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sept. 18-20 — Smiths Falls celebrates stories: Books, storytelling and live entertainment take centre stage during the Smiths Falls Literary Festival — Small Town, Big Stories, running Sept. 19 and 20, with related entertainment beginning Sept. 18.

The weekend features author panels covering non-fiction, fiction, romance, young adult literature, mystery and crime, fantasy and eco-literacy. Among the participating writers are Brenda Chapman, Katie Tallo, Kate Heartfield, Jennifer Whiteford, Doug Phillips and environmentalist and author Diana Beresford-Kroeger.

Entertainment is also part of the program. Bowie's hosts songwriting and storytelling with Nick Di Gaetano and Pat Maloney on Sept. 19 from 4 to 6 p.m. That evening, master illusionists Ted and Marion Outerbridge bring a cabaret-style mystery theatre show to Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95 from 6 to 9 p.m.

SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE 9 PROPERTIES

TAKE NOTICE that on June 22, 2026, Smiths Falls Town Council established its intention to designate the following 9 properties under *Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, C. 0.18*, Section 29 (3) for their cultural heritage value:

- 78 Brockville Street
- 30 Chambers Street
- 65 Chambers Street
- 97 Chambers Street
- 84 Brockville Street
- 102 Brockville Street
- 21 Market Street North
- 89 Chambers Street
- Stone Arch Bridge - Beckwith Street

Information regarding the cultural heritage value of each property can be found at Municipal Heritage | Town of Smiths Falls (https://www.smithsfalls.ca/business-building-development/municipal-heritage/)

As in Section 29(5) of the Ontario Heritage Act, a person who objects to a proposed designation shall, within 30 days after the date of the date of publication of the notice of intention, serve on the Clerk of the Town of Smiths Falls a notice of objection setting out the reason for the objection and all relevant facts. The objection can be hand delivered to the Clerk at Town Hall or emailed to kcostello@smithsfalls.ca.

For more information, contact Karl Grenke, Manager of Development Services, Town Hall, 77 Beckwith Street North, Smiths Falls, by email: kgrenke@smithsfalls.ca, or 613-283-4124 ext. 1116.

Dated this 2nd day of September 2026

77 Beckwith St N., PO Box 695
Smiths Falls, ON K7A 2B8
613.283.4124 • info@smithsfalls.ca • www.smithsfalls.ca

144446

Our History

What Back-to-School meant in the old days



BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON

Remember the old wooden school desks with built-in inkwells? Young people heading back to school this fall may be surprised to learn that lessons were written by hand with fountain pens on lined paper and not by pressing buttons on a computer keyboard or digital pad.

Early schoolhouses had very little equipment and pioneer school desks in Lanark County were simple and functional, combining rough wooden benches and flat desk tops. Because of tight school budgets, throughout most of the 1800s pioneer students relied on wooden-framed slate tablets and chalk to record their lessons. Paper and ink were scarce commodities, often imported, and too expensive for daily student use. The slates allowed children to practice their lessons by wiping the surface clean with a damp cloth after each use.

Schools in Upper Canada gradually switched from slate to paper during the late 1800s as industrialization lowered the cost of paper manufacturing. Slates were eventually phased out and schools slowly introduced paper, ink and quill pens. Because of the costs associated with school books and writing paper students continued to do much of their learning by rote. Long poems and stories were memorized and recited along with multiplication tables and weekly oral spelling bees.

As the use of paper and ink became more widespread many desks were equipped with circular hollows that held small glass or porcelain inkwells. The earliest use of pens in schools were crude quill pens, made from the feathers of large domestic birds. Goose quills, the most common type, were boiled in water then shaped to a point with pen-knife.

In the years that followed students used dip-pens which were fashioned with a metal nib attached to a thin wooden handle, the size of a pencil. Unable to hold ink the dip-pens had to be dipped after each use. By the 1940s and 1950s fountain pens were used at school and some of the later versions had internal barrels or reservoirs designed to keep a stream of ink available for longer periods of time.

It goes without saying that students had to exercise a great deal of care when using the old ink pens. It wasn't unusual for a carefully written page to be ruined by an ink blob, and splatters on notebooks and textbooks were a common sight. Left-handed students were at a disadvantage as they sometimes dragged their hand across a freshly written lesson, or dripped ink across their work since inkwells were almost always located on the right side of the desks. Young ladies wearing their hair in long pigtails were also at risk as naughty boys seated behind them would sometimes dip the ends of their braids into the inkwell.

In the late 1950s the modern ballpoint pen was introduced into Ontario schools. They were initially banned by educators who feared that students would lose their skills at penmanship. Early versions leaked, skipped, and smeared, forcing students to relearn cursive pressure control in order to produce legible work. Ballpoint pens were first launched in Lanark County schools in 1961 on an experimental basis. It was decided that Grades 7 and 8 would be allowed to use them beginning in 1962 and new pens would only be issued twice a year. The Board paid 16 cents per pen, and if a student lost their pen they were responsible for purchasing a replacement.

By the late 1960s the use of ballpoint pens had evolved from an expensive restricted novelty to a standard tool, and desks with inkwell holes and fountain pens vanished from classrooms. Some will recall the days of writing their school lessons seated at those sturdy hardwood desks, with their fountain pens gliding along the page in a proficient cursive script. While the modern-day methods are more streamlined and far less messy, the old-style of writing with pen and paper will always remain a memorable chapter in our local history.

* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

* * *

Obituaries



Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of an obituary in this newspaper. Or, you can call us directly at 514 503-1593. Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.



McNAMEE
Stephen Anthony

DEC. 26, 1936 – AUG. 24, 2026

Peacefully at his home in Perth ON, on August 24, 2026.

Stephen was the beloved son of the late Anita (Stevens) and Desmond McNamee. He was the cherished brother of the late Gregory McNamee, Brenda Neville of Montreal, and brother in law to Kenetha McNamee. Stephen was a proud uncle to his nieces and nephews, and was widely admired by his extended family and friends.

A Funeral Mass was held at St. John's Roman Catholic Church on Tuesday September 1, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. Interment followed at St. John's Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions to Catholic Missions in Canada in memory of Stephen would be appreciated.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com

CODE
Robert "Bob"

JANUARY 14, 1952 – AUGUST 21, 2026



Robert Milton "Bob" Code of Sudbury passed away on August 21, 2026, at the age of 74.

Dad will be forever loved and deeply missed by his daughters, Lisa Parri (PJ) and Bonnie Code (Paul Boyer) and by his grandchildren, Eric, Scarlett and Lily. He also leaves behind his brother, Bill. He was predeceased by his parents, Eric and Madeline Code, and his sister, Susan Penland. He also will be greatly missed by many nieces, nephews and extremely good friends.

Bob devoted more than 40 years of his working life to the Hudson's Bay Company, where he built a long and successful career. Hunting and fishing were lifelong passions and an important part of who he was.

More than anything, Dad will be remembered for the extraordinary size of his heart. Giving came naturally to him. He was generous and kind in a way that people did not forget. He gave freely of what he had, cared deeply for the people in his life and leaves behind a family who will carry his love and memory with them always.

Family and friends are invited to gather at Blair & Son Funeral Home, 15 Gore Street West, Perth, on Thursday, September 3, 2026, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. to share memories and celebrate Bob's life.

In gratitude for the transplant care that made such a difference in Bob's life, memorial donations to the University Hospitals Kingston Foundation in support of the Kingston Kidney Transplant Program would be appreciated in lieu of flowers.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com

In Memoriam



TRYON
Brenda (Pratt)

Who Left us September 6, 2024
Dearly missed by Family and Friends

Just a Thought of Sweet Remembrance
Just a Memory Fond and True
Just a Token of Affection
And a Heartache Still for You
More Each Day We Miss You
Though Our Thoughts Are Not Revealed
Little Do They Know The Sorrow
That Is Within Our Hearts Concealed

Lovely Remembered,
Uncle Bob Tryon & Family
Aunt Grace Wilby & Family
Aunt Faye Wright & James
Joan Smith



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Official and transportation plans

Two major plans near completion

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

After nearly two years of work, the updated Smiths Falls Official Plan as well as the municipality's Transportation Master Plan are nearing completion, with updated information on both presented during a statutory public meeting on August 25 chaired by Town councillor Jay Brennan.

"The (new) draft Official Plan and the Transportation Master Plan work began (simultaneously) in 2024," Councillor Brennan, also a member of the Smiths Falls Planning Advisory Committee, stated before providing some background on both documents.

"The Official Plan encompasses the changes from the most recent Provincial Planning Statement (released in 2024), focusing on five key themes: housing transportation, sustainability, downtown revitalization, and community spaces.

"The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) is the Town's first (such document), and sets a road map for planning our transportation needs over the planning horizon."

Karl Grenke, the Town's director of development services, spoke of the need to update the municipality's current official plan, which was adopted in 2013.

"The current (Smiths Falls) Official Plan has served us quite well," said Grenke.

"It has guided us over an intense period of growth over the last 10 years, and we've actually achieved close to the total number of housing starts that we were expecting to by 2034, which is why we need to expand that and kind of look further into the planning horizon.

"The forecast is that we're going to continue to grow and the Official Plan is our opportunity for us to plan where that (growth) will be and what it will look like."

Grenke added that a new official plan "allows us to take the many things that are working well and plan for the next 30 years," while also providing Town staff and council the opportunity "to zero in on what is important to the community today, especially on the housing front…"

The TMP is a document that will be used to determine the best investments the Town can make in transportation infrastructure with a continued focus on sustainable transportation options.

According to Andrea Winter, the Practice Lead for Civil Infrastructure with the Chatham, Ont. office of Dillon Consulting Limited – the firm that worked with Town staff on both the new Official Plan and Transportation Master Plan – consultants analyzed the current and future road networks in Smiths Falls, "identified potential problems and opportunities," and then compiled and arranged their findings under four categories within the TMP.

Categories

Those categories are: localized improvements; connectivity; strategic capacity; and active transportation.

Rory Baksh, Discipline Lead of Community Plans, Approvals and Policies at Dillon's Ottawa office, pointed out the advantages of working on both documents in tandem.

"One of the things that we can benefit from by taking the Transportation Master Plan planning exercise and doing it in conjunction with the Official Plan is that things that set the tone for the future development and shaping of the community and policy live in the Official Plan," said Baksh.

At the conclusion of the public meeting, Coun. Brennan explained what stakeholders can expect moving forward, regarding the Official Plan.

"The next step is to make revisions (incorporating public input received) and then present that draft to council. Following a decision of council to adopt the Official Plan, it will be submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval."

Winter, who attended the meeting virtually, stated that future TMP steps include creation of both capital and monitoring plans for projects identified within the document, preparation of the Transportation Master Plan draft report, and then releasing the draft TMP for a 30-day public review period.







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Town marks September as Big Brothers Big Sisters Month — Page 9

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Smiths Falls Record
Journal



SF man charged with the murder of a woman

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Councillor Robinson seeks a second term on council

PAGE 3

The Trews are the headline performance at Downtown Music Festival on Saturday, September 12. See page for more details in the entertainment calendar on page 15.

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Smiths Falls business invited to a cycling tourism seminar

Local businesses and tourism operators are being invited to learn how they can benefit from the growing cycling tourism market at a free Ontario By Bike seminar on Sept. 14.

The Cycle Tourism Destination and Community Workshop will run from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Smiths Falls Welcome Centre in Town Hall, 77 Beckwith St. N.

The session is one of several being held in communities connected to the developing Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop, a proposed 320-kilometre off-road cycling route linking portions of the Cataraqui Trail, K&P Trail, Algonquin Trail and Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail.

The project is expected to create new opportunities for restaurants, accommodations, retailers, attractions and other businesses along the route.

Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization estimates the completed loop could eventually generate about $65 million in direct visitor spending.

Smiths Falls councillor launches bid for mayor

A veteran Smiths Falls Peter McKenna councillor has officially entered the race for mayor, pointing to eight years on town council and a lifelong career in social services and community leadership as experience he hopes to bring to the municipality's top job.

The candidate said Smiths Falls has been his home throughout his life and career and that serving on council has given him the opportunity to work closely with residents and community organizations.

"I'm excited to officially announce my candidacy for Mayor of Smiths Falls in the upcoming municipal election," says McKenna.

His campaign will focus heavily on community engagement, with plans to meet residents and hear their concerns and ideas ahead of the Oct. 26 municipal election.

Police give school safety tips

Smiths Falls Police Service is reminding students and families to keep safety top of mind as children return to school and more young people are walking or cycling through local neighbourhoods.

Police are encouraging students to put phones and other devices away while travelling. Earbuds should be removed so pedestrians and cyclists can hear approaching vehicles and remain aware of their surroundings.

Students should cross streets only at marked intersections or crosswalks and follow the directions of school crossing guards. Before stepping onto the roadway, they should look left, right and left again and make eye contact with drivers to ensure they have been seen.

Children who take the school bus are also being reminded to use extra caution. Anyone crossing in front of a bus should remain far enough ahead that they can clearly see the driver and wait for the driver's signal before crossing.

Police also recommend that parents or older siblings practise the school route with younger students before they travel it on their own.



THE ROYAL CANADIAN Legion Smiths Falls Br.95 Membership Chair Ken Manwell and President Jeff Sumara welcomed new members. From Left to Right: Eileen Mallette, Richard Mallette, Kim Paquette, Chad Bernicky, Peggy Bernicky, Chance Peterson, Caitlan Williams, Kevin Williams and Tim Hunter.

Police honour officers, residents for actions above and beyond duty

Smiths Falls police officers, municipal employees and local residents have been recognized for actions ranging from lifesaving interventions to helping solve an armed robbery.

At a recent Smiths Falls Police Services Board meeting, the police chief presented commendations to officers and civilians whose actions were described as going above and beyond in protecting the safety and well-being of the community.

Const. Mike Hart was recognized for his response to a serious single-vehicle collision on Eric Hutchinson Road in January 2025. Hart had been dispatched to assist the Ontario Provincial Police and arrived to find the vehicle engulfed in flames.

Fatality

A citizen and an off-duty paramedic were already attempting to remove the driver. Hart extinguished the fire and helped pull the man from the burning vehicle to safety.

Police said all three placed the driver's safety ahead of their own while trying to save his life. Despite their efforts, the driver later died from his injuries.

Two Town of Smiths Falls Public Works employees, Allan Gorman and Josh Wikenwender, were also commended for helping police solve an armed robbery in January 2025.

The pair were plowing snow during the night when they saw a man wearing a balaclava running from a convenience store. They followed him and noticed him discarding a balaclava and gloves.

When they later saw police at the store, they stopped and reported what they had witnessed. Police determined an armed robbery had just occurred. The discarded items were recovered and processed for DNA, which police said ultimately helped identify the person responsible.

Constables Karling Fraser and Jackson Germann were honoured for their response to a medical emergency at the Smiths Falls Curling Club in May 2025. Officers found a man suffering from serious injuries and immediately provided first aid while awaiting paramedics. Police said paramedics and doctors later praised the officers' quick actions.

Constables Simmons and Bouthillier were also recognized following an August 2026 incident at Old Slys, where Smiths Falls resident Joshua St. Pierre alerted police to a person in crisis dangerously close to the rapids.

Police said the officers intervened immediately and, with help from St. Pierre and Smiths Falls Fire Services, were able to bring the individual to safety despite the high water level and force of the rapids.

The board also recognized Trevor Mains for his performance at the National Special Olympics Games in Medicine Hat.

Mains won gold in the 100-metre breaststroke and bronze as part of a 200-metre relay team, earning recognition from the police service for his achievements on the national stage.

SF man charged with murder after woman found dead

A 35-year-old Smiths Falls man has been charged with second-degree murder following the death of a Spencerville woman last weekend.

The Ontario Provincial Police said officers with the Grenville County detachment responded to a residence on Crowder Road in Spencerville on Saturday, Aug. 29, where they found one person deceased.

Police have identified the victim as Chelsea Swinwood, 37, of Spencerville.

Following an investigation, police arrested Justin Donovan-Biscope, 35, of Smiths Falls on Thursday, Sept. 3.

Donovan-Biscope has been charged with second-degree murder and indignity to a dead body under the Criminal Code.

He remains in custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Brockville on Friday, Sept. 4.

The circumstances surrounding Swinwood's death and the events leading to the arrest have not been released by police.

The Grenville County OPP detachment is continuing the investigation under the direction of the OPP Criminal Investigation Branch.

The Office of the Chief Coroner and the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service are also involved in the investigation. Assistance is being provided by members of the OPP Emergency Response Team and Forensic Identification Services.

Police have not indicated whether they are seeking any additional suspects in connection with the case.

The investigation remains ongoing.

The charges against Donovan-Biscope have not been proven in court.

Election Profile

Robinson seeks second term on Smiths Falls council

Stephen Robinson is seeking a second term on Smiths Falls council, saying he wants to continue focusing on local business, infrastructure, housing, public safety and responsible municipal spending.

Robinson is one of 15 candidates competing for six council seats in the Oct. 26 municipal election.

"I have lived in this community my entire life," Robinson said. "Four years ago, I decided it was time to step forward and help shape the future of the town I have always called home."

He said his first term on council has been both rewarding and educational, particularly in learning how municipal decisions are developed and implemented.

"I quickly learned that meaningful progress requires patience, collaboration, and persistence," he said.

If re-elected, Robinson said supporting Smiths Falls businesses will remain one of his priorities.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our economy," he said, adding the municipality should reduce unnecessary red tape and encourage new investment.

Robinson said a strong business sector creates employment, attracts visitors and contributes to a more active and vibrant community.

Infrastructure will also continue to be a priority, although Robinson said improvements have to reflect the town's financial capacity.

He said investments in roads, water, sewer and other municipal infrastructure benefit both current residents and future generations.

Housing affordability is another major challenge facing Smiths Falls, Robinson said.

While municipalities play an important role through planning decisions and development approvals, he said the financial resources required to produce truly affordable housing largely rest with the provincial and federal governments.

"Long-term affordability requires strong partnerships and investment from those levels," he said.

Public safety

Robinson is also calling for additional measures to improve public safety.

He supports examining enforceable bylaws governing eBikes to encourage safer operation and wants the town to seriously consider installing red-light cameras at key intersections.

"Running red lights has become way too common," Robinson said.

Another area where Robinson believes the town could save money is by investing more in its own workforce.



Stephen Robinson

He said providing municipal employees with additional knowledge, training and skills could reduce the town's reliance on outside consultants and lower consulting costs.

Robinson also said he remains committed to finding a solution to the drainage ditch issue on Marguerite Street.

Watch dog role

If returned to council, Robinson said he will continue questioning municipal decisions, watching spending and focusing on taxpayers' interests.

"I will continue to work hard, ask difficult questions, protect taxpayers' interests, and make decisions based on what I believe is best for Smiths Falls," he said. "Good government requires common sense, fiscal responsibility, and listening."

Robinson said serving on council during the past four years has been an honour and he hopes voters will give him an opportunity to continue the work.

"It has been an honour to serve this community, and I would be grateful for the opportunity to continue serving as your councillor," he said.

Voting Day is Monday, Oct. 26. Smiths Falls will conduct the municipal election entirely through internet and telephone voting.

Public works building gives council cause for a pause — Page 11

Lighthouse Publications

David Leonardo
Publisher

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Letters to the editor are accepted for publication but must be signed by the author and sent to the newspaper concerned with the subject.

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

Winter prep

Lanark County awards five-year highway salt contract



Lanark County Council has awarded a five-year contract for the supply and delivery of bulk coarse highway salt to Compass Minerals following a tender process that closed Aug. 5.

The new contract replaces the county's previous agreement with Cargill Salt.

Director of Public Works Sean Derouin told council Compass Minerals submitted the only bid, despite the tender being circulated to Ontario's other major suppliers, Cargill Salt and Windsor Salt.

The contract is being awarded through a joint tender involving Lanark County and all local municipalities except the Town of Perth, which already has its own agreement with Compass Minerals.

Participating municipalities have agreed to purchase at least 80 per cent of their estimated annual tender quantities. County officials say the commitment is intended to help secure competitive pricing while reducing supplier concerns related to storage and guaranteed demand.

"A five-year contract will secure long-term supply and pricing certainty," Derouin said. "This option protects the county and participating municipalities from future market volatility and reduces the risk of price escalation resulting from future supply shortages."

Municipalities will also be able to increase their annual salt quantities during the life of the contract if winter conditions or operational needs require it.

Public Works plans to offset higher salt prices by increasing the use of "winter mix" on lower-volume roads. The mixture combines sand, salt and stone dust and can be used while still meeting required winter maintenance standards.

Derouin said a similar approach was successfully used during last winter's salt shortage.

During periods of restricted supply, the county reserved more concentrated salt applications for higher-volume roads and freezing rain events while using winter mix where appropriate on less-travelled routes.

Highway salt is one of the county's most important winter maintenance materials, used to improve traction and reduce ice buildup on roads.

By locking in a supplier for five years, county officials say they hope to reduce exposure to future price swings and supply disruptions while ensuring enough material is available for Lanark County and participating municipalities throughout the winter season.

Lanark County shifts September council meeting date

Lanark County Council has approved a change to its September meeting schedule to avoid a conflict with the annual Ontario East Municipal Conference.

Council and committee meetings originally scheduled for Sept. 9 will instead be held Sept. 16.

Clerk Jasmin Ralph told council the change was recommended because several members are expected to attend the municipal conference, which falls on the same date as the previously scheduled meetings.

Under the revised schedule, Lanark County Council will meet Wednesday, Sept. 16, followed by the Community Services Committee and then the Corporate Services Committee.

County Council will meet again Wednesday, Sept. 23, at 5 p.m. The Public Works Committee will meet immediately following that council session, with the Economic Development Committee to follow Public Works. The revised September schedule is: County Council — Sept. 16; Community Services Committee — Sept. 16, following County Council; Corporate Services Committee — Sept. 16, following Community Services; County Council — Sept. 23 at 5 p.m.; Public Works Committee — Sept. 23, following County Council; and Economic Development Committee — Sept. 23, following Public Works.

Carney remains coy about his future as PM and Liberal leader

3-minutes with
Peter Black
Columnist



Now that folks have seen him in action for some 18 months, it's obvious Prime Minister Mark Carney is no ordinary politician.

Perhaps, in your humble scribe's most humble opinion, what really sets Carney apart from others in his position is how he blithely stickhandles around the question of whether he intends to lead his party into the next federal election, whenever that may be.

Last week, a reporter put the question to Carney in the wake of the triumphant hat trick of byelection victories, and the prime minister spent about 100 words and 30 seconds on an artfully constructed deflection.

For the record, here is his slightly edited response: "I've just led the party into two byelections [he meant three], and I'm very pleased that we won all three. I view my role as my colleagues do: to do our job. We're sent to Ottawa for a reason. We're sent here at a critical time. I'm blessed by having three great colleagues who are going to be coming in from very different backgrounds, very different ridings, and we're going to stand up for Canada. We're going to build this country. We're going to help unite this country and we're going to build it for all. And I'm going to focus on that and that's my concern."

So, Prime Minister, is that a yes or no?

Under the circumstances, it's understandable Carney should be allowed to rest on his laurels for a beat instead of baring his soul in a media scrum on the sidewalk in front of his Ottawa office.

Still, there's a reason journalists occasionally pester Carney to prognosticate on his future, and that's because he has steadfastly declined to be specific.

Any other leader we can think of, when asked whether he or she plans to lead the party into the next election would say, heck yeah! And as much as one might doubt such an assertion, well, that's the answer.

By being coy about his future, Carney is either just being playful with the media and already knows he plans to fight the next election, which, given his vertiginous position in the polls, might come sooner rather than the fixed 2029 date.

Or, he is sincerely undecided about when to quit what is now a towering position as not only the would-be saviour of Canada but as a beacon of hope for the non-dictator-led world.

This is likely a topic only he and his soul-mate wife Diana discuss.

But should Carney be determined to be a one-term wonder, setting Canada on the right course in a dizzying and unprecedented spree of government action, then passing the torch, what are the implications of that?

For starters, if he is planning to sail off at the end of his one and only term, the countdown would have to begin soonish to pave the way for the Liberal succession.

A reasonable timetable would be a six-month leadership race, followed by a comfortably long enough period for the new Liberal prime minister to prove she or he is worthy of another mandate for the natural governing party, say four or five months. Add on 40 days or so for the election campaign and the countdown clock starts in January or February of 2029.

Coincidentally, that would be just about the time Donald J. Trump officially finishes his second term, and a new United States administration takes over – odds currently favour soon-to-be-former California Governor Gavin Newsom.

The Trump rampage could end earlier, however, if the President and his allies fail to corrupt the mid-terms in November, and he is chased from office or at least chastened by impeachment, or simply neutralized by a strong Democratic majority in the House of Representatives.

Regardless, Carney's term and his entire political mission are dedicated to Trump-proofing Canada and doing what should have been done years ago, but for the false comfort of free trade agreements, which is growing the country's economic and cultural independence from the United States.

Your scribe is no Parliamentary Hill insider, but it seems likely and logical that Liberal operatives, intoxicated by the Carney miracle, are murmuring darkly in the watering holes of the ByWard Market about life beyond their saviour, whether it's in three years or later.

Lanark County municipal leaders heading to Ontario East conference

Municipal representatives from Lanark County will join hundreds of political, economic development and business leaders in Ottawa next week for the 2026 Ontario East Municipal Conference.

The conference runs Sept. 9 to 11 at the Ottawa Conference and Event Centre and is expected to attract more than 300 delegates from across Eastern Ontario. Lanark County, Perth and Smiths Falls are among the municipalities being promoted as participants in this year's event.

Lanark County has moved its Sept. 9 council and committee meetings to Sept. 16 because the original date conflicts with the conference and many county councillors plan to attend.

Organizers are placing a strong emphasis this year on preparing Eastern Ontario communities for future economic growth through collaboration, innovation and investment. Programming is organized around economic development, municipal and community development and workforce development.

Sessions will tackle many of the issues confronting Lanark County municipalities, including affordable housing, government funding, municipal law, infrastructure, workforce shortages, artificial intelligence and attracting industrial development.

Major regional opportunities will also be explored. A Sept. 10 panel will examine how the proposed Alto high-speed rail project could generate economic opportunities for Eastern Ontario communities through investment, tourism, workforce development and improved regional connections.

The conference concludes with a presentation examining Eastern Ontario's economic outlook.

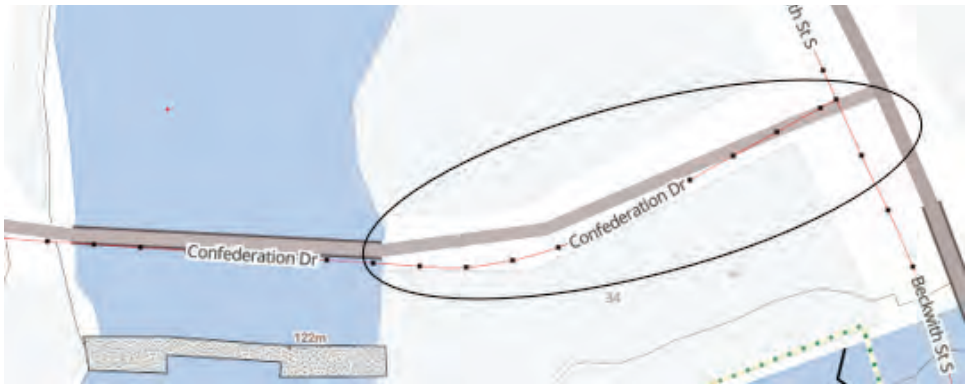
TOWN PAGE

SMITHS FALLS

SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

NOTICE TO RENAME A PORTION OF CONFEDERATION DRIVE

Take notice that Town Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls intends to consider the passage of a resolution at their meeting on the 28th day of September 2026 beginning at 5:00 p.m. for re-naming a portion of Confederation Drive from the east side of the new timber pedestrian bridge (see below), "Veterans Way" in recognition of the Smiths Falls Veterans who have served and continue to serve in the protection and peace-keeping missions of our country. Additional information related to the proposed street naming is available electronically and may be obtained by contacting Karl Grenke, Manager of Development Services (***kgrenke@smithsfalls.ca, 613-283-4124 Ext. 1116***) during regular office hours, Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. The public is invited to submit written comments on the proposed name by September 23, 2026, at 4:30 pm to Kerry Costello, Clerk at ***kcostello@smithsfalls.ca***, or by hand delivering to Town Hall, 77 Beckwith Street North, Smiths Falls. Dated at the Town of Smiths Falls this 9th day of September 2026.



COUNCIL MEETINGS

September 14, 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting 5 PM
September 21, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council 5 PM
Attend in person at Town Hall (77 Beckwith Street North)
or view live streamed proceedings on:
Facebook - facebook.com/townofsmithsfalls
YouTube - Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
For Council, Committee and Board meeting agendas, visit:
smithsfalls.ca/meeting

MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2026

As of September 1, 2026, all voters can ensure that their names and relevant information are correct on the voters' list. To be added, deleted or to make any other corrections to their information, please contact Giselle Nayel at ***613-283-4124 Ext. 1125*** or ***gnayel@smithsfalls.ca***. Identification and proof of residence is required. (learn more: ***smithsfalls.ca/election***) Amendments can be made during normal office hours beginning September 1 up to and including the close of voting on October 26 at 8 p.m.





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Alto annual meeting Oct. 7 could bring answers on a Lanark County rail route

Lanark County residents concerned about Canada's proposed high-speed rail system may get another opportunity for answers next month when Alto holds its 2026 Annual Public Meeting.

The federal Crown corporation announced Sept. 4 that the virtual meeting will take place Wednesday, Oct. 7, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. EDT.

Alto president and CEO Martin Imbleau, board chair J. Robert S. Prichard and vice-chair Marie-José Nadeau will host the meeting, which will be presented in both official languages and streamed online. Alto says officials will provide an update on the corporation's mandate and accomplishments over the past year.

For residents of Lanark County, however, one of the biggest unanswered questions is where the Toronto-to-Ottawa portion of the proposed Toronto–Québec City high-speed rail line will ultimately be built.

Alto continues to assess both northern and southern corridors between Peterborough and Ottawa. No final alignment has been selected. The northern study corridor has raised concerns in communities including Mississippi Mills, Lanark Highlands and Drummond/North Elmsley, where residents and municipal officials have questioned potential effects on farmland, homes, environmentally sensitive areas, road access and property values.

A major change came in June when federal Transport Minister Steven MacKinnon directed Alto to assess a southern option between Peterborough and Ottawa that could include Kingston as a high-speed rail stop and connect with existing VIA Rail services.

Northern corridor still alive

Mississippi Mills Mayor Christa Lowry said following discussions with Alto in July that the Kingston study did not eliminate the northern corridor from consideration. Alto told the municipality the Ottawa–Toronto route was expected to become clearer in early 2027.

That means Lanark County property owners whose lands fall within Alto's broad study corridor could face several more months of uncertainty.

The corridor currently under examination is approximately 10 kilometres wide, while Alto says the eventual railway right-of-way would be roughly 60 metres wide. Technical, environmental, social and financial studies are being used to gradually narrow the corridor before a final alignment is chosen.

Alto says the next public consultation will focus first on a narrowed Ottawa–Montréal corridor this fall. Consultations covering the western Toronto–Ottawa segment are expected in early 2027.

Opposition to the project has been significant in Lanark County.

County opposition

County council voted in March to support an Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus resolution opposing Alto in its current form. The resolution raised concerns about agricultural land, municipal roads, trails, environmental areas, emergency access and what county officials described as limited benefits for rural communities that would not receive a station.

Drummond/North Elmsley and Lanark Highlands councils have also formally opposed the proposal.

The Oct. 7 annual meeting could therefore draw particular interest locally if Alto provides a clearer schedule for deciding between the northern and Kingston-area alternatives.

Members of the public and media can submit questions during the webcast or send questions to Alto in advance by Oct. 1.

Lanark County receives update on community safety and well-being plan

About affordability and quality of life, health, violence against persons, and priority populations and diversity

Lanark County Council has received a progress report on work completed in 2025 under the Community Plan for Safety and Well-being for Lanark County and Smiths Falls.

The 2025-2029 plan, adopted last year by all local municipalities, identifies four major priority areas: affordability and quality of life, health, violence against persons, and priority populations and diversity.

Lanark County OPP Detachment Board Support Coordinator Stephanie Gray told council the largest area of activity continues to be affordability and quality of life.

"Affordability and quality of life is the biggest theme area in the plan," Gray said.

Progress reported in that area included the expansion of child care spaces, grant funding aimed at helping clients achieve greater housing stability and completion of a transit feasibility study.

Climate action

Municipalities also continued work under local climate action plans, launched a Natural Heritage System workplan and undertook initiatives aimed at supporting diversity, equity and inclusion across local communities.

The health component of the plan also saw a number of developments during 2025.

Those included efforts to divert some calls away from hospital emergency departments, the creation of the Lanark Integrated Frontline Team, known as LIFT, and grant funding supporting education and wellness fairs.

The expansion of the HART Hub in Smiths Falls was also identified as a significant development under the health theme.

Council was also updated on initiatives aimed at preventing and responding to violence against persons.

Among those were the Coaching Boys Into Men prevention program, grant support for the Victim Advocate program and additional training and education related to intimate partner violence and healthy relationships.

Anti-hate training

Police officers also received anti-hate crime training, while schools participated in the Safe and Inclusive Schools Officer Visits and Books program.

The Community Safety and Well-being Plan is intended to coordinate municipal governments, police, social services, health agencies and community organizations around issues that can contribute to crime, victimization and poor community outcomes.

Rather than focusing solely on enforcement, the plan emphasizes prevention and early intervention by addressing social and economic pressures that can affect community safety.

The current plan runs through 2029, with progress monitored as municipalities and community partners continue implementing programs and initiatives within each of the four priority areas.

Ontario boosts ambulance funding in Lanark, Frontenac counties

Investments credited with cutting ambulance offload times by 68 per cent from 2022 peak

The Ontario government is increasing funding for ambulance services in Lanark and Frontenac counties as part of an effort to keep more paramedics on the road and reduce delays transferring patients at hospital emergency departments.

Lanark County will receive $7.3 million in provincial land ambulance funding this year, a five-per-cent increase, while Frontenac County will receive more than $14.3 million, representing a 14-per-cent increase.

The province is also providing $547,635 through its Dedicated Off-load Nurses Program to support nurses and other eligible health professionals who help transfer ambulance patients into hospital care.

The program is intended to reduce the amount of time paramedics spend waiting at emergency departments before responsibility for a patient can be transferred to hospital staff. That allows ambulance crews to return to the community sooner and respond to additional 9-1-1 calls.

Ontario says ambulance offload times across the province have fallen approximately 68 per cent from their peak in October 2022 as a result of additional funding and collaboration between hospitals and paramedic services.

John Jordan, MPP for Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston and parliamentary assistant to the minister of health, said the funding will strengthen emergency services in both counties.

"I am proud to support the dedicated teams at Lanark County Paramedic Service and Frontenac Paramedics," Jordan said. "This vital investment from our government strengthens the essential work our paramedics do every day — responding with compassion, skill and speed, to keep our residents safe."

Support is needed

Lanark County Paramedic Service Chief Travis Mellema said continued provincial support is increasingly important as the county grows and demand for emergency medical services rises.

"The Province of Ontario's ongoing investment through the Land Ambulance Service Grant is an important part of supporting the high-quality paramedic care our communities rely on every day," Mellema said.



"As Lanark County grows and demand for our services continues to increase, this sustained provincial partnership helps ensure our paramedics have the resources they need to respond when residents need them most."

Frontenac Paramedics Chief and Director Marc Goudie welcomed both the increase in ambulance funding and continued provincial support for a dedicated offload nurse position at Kingston General Hospital.

Goudie said reducing hospital transfer delays helps preserve ambulance capacity for residents of Frontenac County and Kingston at a time when demand for paramedic services continues to increase.

Ontario is providing more than $1 billion in land ambulance funding to municipalities across the province this year, an average increase of nine per cent compared with 2025.

Rising operating costs

The province says increases in base funding are intended to help municipalities manage rising operating costs while maintaining emergency response capacity.

Hospital offload delays have long been a concern for paramedic services because an ambulance crew waiting inside an emergency department is unavailable to answer another call.

By providing dedicated hospital staff to receive patients from paramedics, the province says ambulances can be returned to service faster, improving their availability for urgent calls throughout the community.

Lanark County seeks nominations for 2026 Awards of Excellence

Residents are being asked to shine a spotlight on the people, organizations and businesses making a difference across Lanark County as nominations open for the 2026 Lanark County Awards of Excellence.

The annual awards recognize residents and businesses that have made significant or extraordinary contributions to the county, with this year's nomination deadline set for Oct. 2. Awards are expected to be presented during the first Lanark County Council meeting in November.

Nominees can be recognized in a wide range of categories, including volunteerism, community service, youth, business and industry, agriculture, tourism, heritage and ecology, arts and culture, recreation and sports, and philanthropy.

The awards program dates back to 2005 and was created as a way for county council to thank residents for their contributions, provide greater recognition for their work and encourage further community involvement. To qualify, a nominee must live in Lanark County or operate a business or industry in the county and must have made a significant contribution to the county as a whole or to at least two municipalities.

Nominations can be submitted by individuals or organizations, although self-nominations are not accepted. Sitting members of Lanark County Council are not permitted to submit nominations, and municipal employees cannot receive an award for work performed as part of their regular duties. Recipients are selected by an Awards Sub-Committee of council after nominations are reviewed.

Community leaders

The program has recognized a wide variety of community leaders in recent years.

In 2025, council honoured Erin Lee of Lanark County Interval House and Community Support for community service, Isabel Lowry of Almonte in recreation and sports, Korrine Jordan of Tay Valley Township for community service and Sheila Gibson of Carleton Place for volunteerism.

The previous year saw Jan Watson of Home Hospice North Lanark receive the volunteerism award, Joan Southwell of the Mississippi Mills Public Library recognized for community service, Kristine Fair of the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital Foundation honoured for philanthropy, and Tanya Jamieson of the Best Western Plus Perth Parkside Inn & Spa recognized for business and industry.

Past award recipients

Earlier recipients illustrate the broad scope of the awards. In 2023, honourees included Home Hospice North Lanark's Wendy O'Keefe, Mississippi Mills Public Library CEO Christine Row, Carleton Place and District Memorial Hospital Foundation volunteer Linda McGreevy and Thomas Cavanagh Construction Limited.

The county says the goal is not simply to reward achievement, but to recognize people whose efforts improve life throughout the community and encourage others to become involved.

Nomination forms and further information are available through the Lanark County website. Completed nominations can also be directed to the Lanark County Clerk's Office, care of Deputy Clerk Megan Beson, at 99 Christie Lake Rd. in Perth. The office can be reached at 613-267-4200 ext. 1102 or mbeson@lanarkcounty.ca.

Town marks September as Big Brothers Big Sisters Month

Firefighter shares his experiences as a Big Brother to a youngster

Smiths Falls Mayor Shawn Pankow has officially proclaimed September 2026 as Big Brothers Big Sisters Month, recognizing the role mentorship can play in helping young people build confidence, develop skills and reach their potential.

The proclamation highlights the work of Big Brothers Big Sisters and the volunteers who give their time to provide positive, consistent relationships for children and youth in the community.

One of those volunteers is Jaden Sunderland, a member of the Smiths Falls Fire Department who recently became a Big Brother.

Sunderland said his decision to join the program grew from a desire to continue serving the community outside his work as a firefighter.

"I believe in the importance of positive role models," Sunderland said. "I wanted to find another meaningful way to give back to the community outside of my job as a firefighter and wanted to use my time and experience to be a positive influence in a young person's life."

He said the Big Brothers Big Sisters program provides an opportunity to share experiences, explore new activities and help a young person develop greater self-confidence.

"Sharing experiences, trying new activities, and helping my little build confidence and recognize their potential are benefits that come with the program and the reason why I became interested in joining," Sunderland said.

As a firefighter, Sunderland is already accustomed to serving the community in situations that can demand responsibility, patience and trust. His decision to become a Big Brother extends that community commitment into a one-on-one mentoring relationship.

Big Brothers Big Sisters programs are built around matching young people with screened adult mentors who can provide guidance, encouragement and friendship. The goal is to create stable, supportive relationships that can have a lasting impact on a child's development and sense of belonging.

The Smiths Falls proclamation places a local spotlight on that work throughout September and recognizes both the young people who participate and the volunteers who make the program possible.

For Sunderland, the commitment is rooted in the simple idea that having a dependable role model can make a meaningful difference.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Month also serves as an opportunity to encourage other residents to consider volunteering and helping ensure more local children and youth have access to positive mentorship. build confidence, create connections, and inspire the next generation right here in our community.

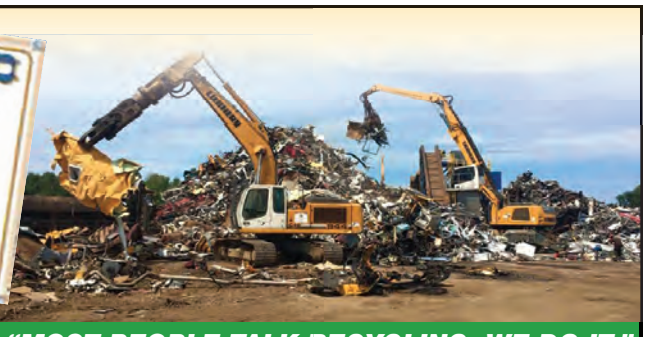


BIG BROTHER and firefighter Jaden Sunderland at the fire hall.

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Smiths Falls police, fire crews train together for future water rescues

Smiths Falls police and firefighters recently joined forces for a joint water rescue training session aimed at strengthening communication, coordination and emergency preparedness.

The Smiths Falls Fire Department hosted members of the Smiths Falls Police Service for the training, which focused on water safety, rescue techniques and the different roles each emergency service may play when responding to incidents on or near the water.

Police thanked firefighters for sharing their expertise and described the session as an example of local emergency services working together before an actual emergency occurs.

"This was a great example of Smiths Falls emergency services working together to strengthen emergency preparedness and keep our community safe," a police spokesperson said. "Our officers greatly appreciated the opportunity to learn from the knowledge and expertise of our Fire Service members."

The department added that it is proud to work alongside local firefighters in serving Smiths Falls residents.

Water rescue incidents can change rapidly, making communication and a clear understanding of each agency's responsibilities especially important.

The fire department brings specialized training and equipment for water rescue situations, while police officers contribute their own emergency response experience, scene management skills and perspective.

By training together, both services can become more familiar with each other's capabilities and procedures before they are required to work side by side during an emergency.

"When the call comes in, we work as one," the departments said in highlighting the exercise.

Communications

Joint training also gives emergency personnel an opportunity to practise communication under realistic conditions, identify possible challenges and build trust between responders.

Fire and police officials said that understanding each other's strengths and roles can make a critical difference during a water emergency, where conditions can deteriorate within seconds.

The exercise is part of ongoing efforts by Smiths Falls emergency services to maintain readiness for a wide range of incidents.

While each department has different responsibilities and specialized training, both share the same goal when an emergency occurs: protecting residents and responding as safely and effectively as possible.

Officials said training together helps ensure that when a real water rescue call comes in, responders are better prepared to act quickly and as a coordinated team.



Sticker Shocked!

Public works bldg. gives council cause for a pause

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Smiths Falls town council was struck by 'sticker shock' over the recently presented price tag for the Town's proposed new public works operations centre on Air Care Drive.

"I'm having a very difficult time understanding why we're even contemplating spending close to $10 million on this building," Councillor Steve Robinson said during the August 31 special committee of the whole meeting.

"Montague (Township) built a facility that's about the same size…for somewhere between $6 million and $6.3 million."

Coun. Robinson was reacting to a staff report presented by the Town's Director of Public Works and Utilities Paul McMunn which included the recommendation to award the construction tender for the new building – in the amount of $9,378,201.60 (including net HST) – to Navan, Ont.-based Bircon Canada.

With additional associated costs related to design, furnishings and contingencies, the total cost of the project has been pegged at about $10.5 million.

Councillor Chris McGuire was also displeased with the cost.

"The Montague example, $7,401,159 (construction price), was for eight (vehicle) bays, where we're only getting six. This one (Smiths Falls') has more office space, but the Montague one has a gym and a 30,000-litre (fire department water storage) cistern," he said.

"They're not exactly apples to apples, but…I think it's a pretty fair comparison. And if we look at Perth, they're estimating $5.5 million for a new public works garage."

McMunn explained that there are major differences among all three public works facilities.

"They (Perth and Smiths Falls) are two different builds altogether," he said.

"With ours, for the warehouse portion and the garage portion, it will be a Butler-style building…a pre-fab steel garage… Perth's doing a wood structure, a stick-framed building. So, very, very different."

Regarding the Montague Township building, McMunn feels it cannot be fairly compared with the Smiths Falls structure.

"We've got a 4,000-square-foot administrative wing (with 11 offices). I've been to the building in Montague and…they've got three offices," he said.

Councillor Jay Brennan pointed out another significant distinction between the Montague and Smiths Falls facilities.

"I think Montague got their pricing two years ago. We're in a different world now," he said, pointing to factors such as inflation, U.S.-imposed tariffs and procurement policy changes at various levels of government.

With council collectively stating that they expected the cost of the Town's new public works operations centre to come in somewhere between $7.5 million and $8 million, they directed municipal staff to take another look at the facility's design plans and come up with some ideas/strategies for potential savings.

Staff was slated to report back with their findings and suggestions in time for another special C.O.W. meeting, preceding the scheduled regular council session, on September 8, at which time council was expected to approve or reject the project.

Scaling back

Among the possible items considered for either scaling back or elimination in order to realize significant savings were the facility's proposed 4,000-square-foot administrative wing and a 5,000-square-foot cold storage space – the latter having an estimated cost of $700,000.

However, both council and staff expressed reservations about eliminating the storage component, citing the scarcity of such space within the municipality, soon to be compounded by the loss of the so-called "Ponderosa Building" on Old Mill Road.

The Town's director of community services Stephanie Clark said last week that the aging structure, used by her department, "will be taken offline (decommissioned), probably in the next month or so," due to its deteriorating condition and related safety concerns.







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Lanark County approves policy for Active Kids, Bright Futures

Lanark County Council has approved a new Social Services policy to guide the implementation of Active Kids, Bright Futures, a program designed to help low-income children and youth take part in recreational and community activities.

The program will provide eligible families with up to $500 per child to help cover the cost of approved activities, including sports, arts programs, clubs, educational opportunities and camps.

Active Kids, Bright Futures is being funded through proceeds from the Warden's Golf Tournament, along with a $50,000 allocation in the county's 2026 budget to establish the program.

Director of Social Services Emily Hollington said the policy provides a standardized approach for administering the program using existing county staff.

The framework is intended to ensure applications are handled fairly and consistently, with clear rules governing eligibility, payments and approved expenses.



Families will be required to meet income and asset eligibility requirements before receiving assistance.

Rather than issuing funds directly to applicants, the county will make payments to approved recreation and activity providers.

Funding can be used toward registration, participation and membership fees. It can also cover required basic equipment, up to a maximum of $75, as well as some transportation costs associated with participation.

Recognized groups

Eligible activities must be offered through a recognized organization or service provider.

County officials say the program is intended not only to reduce financial barriers to recreation, but also to give children and youth greater opportunities to participate in their communities.

Recreation costs can present a significant obstacle for lower-income households, particularly when registration fees, equipment and transportation are combined. The new program is designed to address several of those expenses through a single funding stream.

Staff planned to launch Active Kids, Bright Futures on Sept. 1.

Families interested in applying can contact their Social Services caseworker. Those who do not already have an appointment can contact the Lanark County office to book one and obtain further information about eligibility and the application process.

Two Ottawa residents face nine charges after major Lanark County drug investigation

A drug trafficking investigation spanning more than a year has resulted in nine charges against two Ottawa residents after police executed eight search warrants in Carleton Place and Kanata and seized cocaine, suspected opioids, methamphetamine, cash and four vehicles.

The Ontario Provincial Police said its East Region Community Street Crime Unit began investigating suspected drug trafficking in communities throughout the Lanark County area in June 2025.

The investigation culminated Aug. 26, 2026 — roughly 14 months later — when officers carried out eight search warrants involving residences and vehicles in Carleton Place and several addresses in Kanata.

It was a large, co-ordinated operation involving numerous specialized police units.

Along with the OPP Community Street Crime Unit and Lanark County OPP, officers from the OPP Tactical and Rescue Unit, Emergency Response Team, Canine Unit, Organized Crime and Enforcement Bureau, Digital Forensics, Provincial Asset Forfeiture Unit, East Region Intelligence Unit and Physical Surveillance Unit participated.

The Ottawa Police Tactical Unit and Provincial Guns and Gangs — East Region were also involved.

Police say approximately 677 grams of suspected cocaine, a large quantity of suspected opioid pills and 10 grams of suspected methamphetamine were seized during the searches.

Investigators also seized $18,555 in Canadian currency, four vehicles, jewellery, 12 cellphones, three digital scales and a GPS tracker.

Street value unknown

Police have not released an estimated street value for the drugs or provided details about which items were seized at individual Carleton Place and Kanata locations.

Miguel Ortiz-Umana, 36, of Ottawa, has been charged with possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking, two counts of possession of another drug for the purpose of trafficking, conspiracy to commit an indictable offence and possession of proceeds of property obtained by crime over $5,000.

Harley Smith, 26, also of Ottawa, faces four charges: possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking, possession of another drug for the purpose of trafficking, conspiracy to commit an indictable offence and possession of proceeds of property obtained by crime over $5,000.

Ortiz-Umana was remanded in custody pending a bail hearing. Smith was released from custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Perth on Sept. 21.

None of the charges has been proven in court.

The seizure comes amid continuing concern about the toxicity and unpredictability of the illegal drug supply across southeastern Ontario. The South East Health Unit has previously warned that cocaine and other street drugs can contain unexpected substances and reported in August 2025 that overdoses in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark communities were continuing to rise. At that point, the health unit reported three confirmed or probable drug-poisoning deaths and 13 suspected deaths in the region during 2025.

Police have not indicated whether additional arrests or charges are anticipated as part of the Lanark County investigation.

The OPP is asking anyone with information about the possession, manufacture or trafficking of illegal drugs to contact police at 1-888-310-1122.

Information can also be provided anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS).

Your Health

Are gel manicures safe?

The European Union (EU) recently banned an ingredient commonly used in gel nail polish following research linking the product with fertility problems. The ban concerns Trimethylbenzoyl Diphenylphosphine Oxide (TPO), a chemical that's used to harden polish under UV light. Gel manicures remain one of the most popular nail treatments, prized for their chip-resistant, glossy finish that can last for weeks Before the polish is applied, nails are lightly buffed to help the product adhere to the nail surface, before being cured under a UV lamp. Removal then involves soaking the nail in acetone and scraping away the polish.

Unlike traditional polish, gel products contain chemicals known as acrylates, which harden when exposed to UV or LED light. Nail experts say the biggest risk to nail health often comes not from the gel itself, but from the way it is applied and removed. Any sort of over-buffing is going to damage the nail, leaving nails brittle.

Eating canned food is healthier than you think



Certain canned foods are filled with nutrients that may protect against stroke. According to dietitians, they provide antioxidants, omega-3 fatty acids, potassium, folate and fiber that can support normal blood flow and keep your brain operating smoothly. Because they're shelf-stable, they make getting the nutrients you need to support cardiovascular, blood vessel and brain health easy. Select BPA-free cans to reduce chemical exposure. To keep sodium to a minimum, look for no-sodium-added or low-sodium cans. Check ingredient lists to avoid added sugars, artificial flavors, or preservatives.

Canned beans such as kidney beans, black beans and chickpeas are a simple way to support your artery health and reduce your risk of stroke. Beans are an excellent source of fiber, particularly soluble fiber, which slows digestion and binds to cholesterol, pulling it out of the body. Beans are also an excellent source of potassium, a key mineral for healthy blood pressure.

Canned or tinned fish such as salmon, sardines, anchovies, herring and mackerel is loaded with nutrients that support heart health and protect your brain from stroke. These fish are all packed with beneficial long-chain omega-3 fatty acids. These important fats, found mainly in fatty fish, guard against stroke by lowering blood pressure and triglycerides and decreasing the likelihood of blood clots. Studies have shown that eating fish twice a week can reduce the risk of stroke and heart disease.

Canned tomatoes are rich in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant linked to reduced risk of certain cancers, heart disease, and inflammation. Their bioavailability is often higher in canned tomatoes than in fresh tomatoes due to the heat used in canning, which breaks down cell walls and makes lycopene easier to absorb. They also provide vitamins C, A, E, and K, supporting immune function, skin health, vision, and bone health. Additionally, canned tomatoes are low in calories and fat but high in fiber.

Did you know those tasty tomatoes can fight fatty liver disease

A study by the Italian National Institute of Gastroenterology took 79 people who had fatty liver disease and allocated them to two groups: one had to eat 200g of raw tomatoes plus 50g of tomato sauce every day for six weeks, the other group had to avoid tomatoes completely. Fatty liver disease occurs when excess fat builds up in the liver, most commonly due to metabolic factors such as obesity, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol, or high blood pressure. For many people it causes no immediate symptoms, but in others it progresses to inflammation, scarring, cirrhosis and even liver cancer.

The researchers measured fat in the liver using a FibroScan. After just six weeks there was a clear difference: the liver-fat reading dropped by 35 points in the tomato eaters. There were no significant differences between the groups in BMI, waist circumference, total body fat or visceral fat (the toxic fat that can build up around your organs). There were also no dramatic changes in their cholesterol, blood sugar or standard liver blood tests. The researchers think compounds in tomatoes, particularly lycopene and beta-carotene, may change the way the liver handles fat.

The Italian researchers used both raw tomatoes and tomato sauce because they offer slightly different benefits. Raw tomatoes preserve more vitamin C, while cooking makes lycopene easier to absorb. And because lycopene is fat soluble, eating cooked tomatoes with olive oil may boost absorption even further.

Smiths Falls and Rideau Lakes offer busy fall calendar of music, festivals and family events

Residents looking for something to do after Sept. 9 will find a busy fall calendar across Smiths Falls and Rideau Lakes, with live music, literary events, heritage attractions, a rodeo, harvest celebrations and Halloween activities extending well into October.

The entertainment begins in Smiths Falls with the final Downtown Ghost Walk of the season on Friday, Sept. 11, followed one day later by one of the town's biggest musical events of the fall.

Music Festival

The Downtown Smiths Falls Music Festival takes over the downtown Saturday, Sept. 12. Free, all-ages performances begin at 1 p.m. along Russell Street East, with Landon Bedor, DaNielle Hewitt and Spencer Scharf among the performers. The evening moves to the Miller Brooke Place parking lot at 21 Main St. W., where Canadian rock band The Trews headlines a ticketed 19-plus concert with Vicki Brittle and the One Eyed Dawgs. The evening portion runs from 7 to 10:30 p.m.

Music continues Sept. 18 when VANCAMP and Tristan Konkle perform at Bowie's in Smiths Falls.

The weekend of Sept. 19 and 20 will be especially crowded. The first Smiths Falls Literary Festival — Small Town, Big Stories brings authors, readers and performers together for discussions covering fiction, romance, mystery and crime, fantasy, young-adult literature and environmental writing. Featured participants include Diana Beresford-Kroeger, Brenda Chapman, Katie Tallo, Kate Heartfield and Ted Outerbridge.

The festival also includes songwriting and storytelling at Bowie's Sept. 19. Jim Bryson performs at Bowie's on Sept. 20.

Families can head to the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario on Sept. 19 for the Hallow's Express, a wizard-themed event featuring activities, characters, scavenger hunts and train rides aboard vintage railway equipment.

Also Sept. 19 and 20, the Smiths Falls Home & Outdoor Show takes over the Smiths Falls Curling and Squash Club at 13 Old Sly's Road. The show runs Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., bringing together vendors focused on homes, gardens and outdoor living.

History gets a slightly darker treatment Sept. 20 during a Hillcrest Cemetery Tour beginning at 1 p.m. Guides will introduce visitors to some of the town's earliest residents while explaining cemetery customs, symbolism and traditions. Advance registration is required.

In Rideau Lakes, the Lombardy Kioti Rodeo is scheduled for Sept. 25 and 26, bringing two nights of rodeo competition to the Lombardy Agricultural Society grounds.

The following day, Delta Harvest Festival returns Saturday, Sept. 26, turning much of the village into a celebration of rural life and local heritage.

Activities at the Delta Fair Grounds run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and include a craft sale, car show and entertainment. The historic Old Stone Mill will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with tours, bread tasting and a milling demonstration scheduled for 1 p.m. Blacksmith demonstrations, the Delta Fire Hall Museum, recreational activities, children's programming and vendors will also be part of the village-wide event.

October brings a string of seasonal events back to Smiths Falls. Fall Fest at the Heritage House Museum runs from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 4, with wagon rides, scavenger hunts, arts and crafts, a petting zoo and activities connected with the Community Pumpkin Carving Contest.

Museum Ghost Tours follow Oct. 8, with Haunted Heritage House evenings scheduled Oct. 16-17 and 23-24. Downtown Smiths Falls will then hold its Falls Spooktacular weekend Oct. 24 and 25, including the daytime Skele-Bration and an evening Mystic Market on Oct. 24.

Morton Community Hall

Rideau Lakes also gets a major musical event on Sunday, Oct. 18, when Juno-nominated Mohawk singer-songwriter Logan Staats performs at Morton Community Hall as part of the Ontario Festival of Small Halls. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. with the concert beginning at 3 p.m.

You can reach Smiths Falls with your newspaper

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LANARK COUNTY

LANARK COUNTY COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2027 FUNDING

Are you part of a non-profit agency or organization that provides programs or services in Lanark County that support or improve the well-being and quality of life in the community?

You may be eligible for a Lanark County Community Grant! Applications open on July 20, 2026 for 2027 funding.

Program details can be found online at www.lanarkcounty.ca

The deadline to apply is **September 18, 2026**.

Completed applications and/or questions may be addressed to:

Lanark County Clerk's Office
c/o Megan Beson, Deputy Clerk
99 Christie Lake Road, Perth, ON K7H 3C6
Phone: 613-267-4200 ext. 1102
Email: mbeson@lanarkcounty.ca

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Our History

Forced roads on private properties was accepeted



BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON

Living in an age where we take transportation for granted, it's difficult to imagine that our pioneer ancestors faced tremendous obstacles in order to purchase supplies, attend church, visit with friends, or drive to a nearby town. Lanark County was heavily wooded, with early roads little more than unrefined paths cleared wide enough to allow the passage of wagons in the warmer months and cutters in the winter. When settlers arrived from Ireland and Scotland, crude roads were built and maintained by the pioneers, and travel on some of these homemade roads was nearly impossible depending on the time of year.

As more settlers came, there was a greater demand for more reliable roads, heightened by the influx of preachers, doctors, merchants and tradesmen. By the 1850s some of the roads were planked with pine improving travel, particularly over low marshy areas, or hilly, rocky terrain; however, in time the wood rotted, becoming unstable and pulpy, especially during the wet spring months.

Another obstacle impeding early transportation was the design of the original county surveys, laid out in a grid system of lots and concessions. Road allowances were included to serve as public roadways between lots. These early surveys, while they looked good on paper, sometimes placed roads through swamps, impassable bedrock, or bodies of water. When the local settlers and road crews attempted to build the roads according to the surveys they often encountered heavily obstructed terrain.

In order to build a road around these obstacles they forced paths through adjacent private lands. Landowners typically tolerated and in some cases welcomed the public cutting through their land because it also allowed the title holders access to nearby towns and more well-constructed main roads.

Although this was technically trespassing, most owners didn't seek compensation, and because surveying, purchasing, or legally expropriating private land was expensive and time-consuming, local authorities usually ignored the usual process.

Many cottage access roads began as forced roads, maintained either seasonally or year-round, and through the decades some have been upgraded to meet municipal standards. Most members of the public using them assume that they are municipal roads, and once a route is heavily used for a long period of time the courts traditionally recognize it as a public roadway.

Interestingly, even though a forced road is constructed on private land and the title remains in the property owner's name, the public may not be prevented from using the road. In the case of a cottage road when the property of one neighbour is landlocked without the use of the forced road, the user with access has no legal right to alter it, nor does the owner have any obligation to maintain it.

These forced roads were a clever and practical remedy allowing transportation routes for the early settlers, around swamps, bedrock, lakes and rivers. Despite the daunting challenges they faced, the development of those early forced roads is another shining example of how the pioneers overcame obstacles with common sense solutions.

* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

* * *

September is suicide prevention month in Province of Ontario



September is Suicide Prevention Month, a time to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and remind one another that help is available.

In Ontario, suicide is the second leading cause of death among teenagers between the ages of 15 and 19. While suicide deaths remain the highest among young men, the suicide rate in Canadian teenage girls has continued to climb steadily. The rising suicide rate among teenage girls and young women in their twenties is a trend occurring in many countries around the world. Research suggests some factors behind the growing suicide rates among teen girls include the pressure to live up to body image and beauty standards from social media, as well as online bullying. Recognizing the warning signs and reaching out with care can make a difference. Warning signs can include talking about hopelessness, helplessness or being a burden; withdrawing from friends, family or usual activities; experiencing extreme mood swings or reckless behaviour; and giving away belongings or talking about death. For support, call or text 9-8-8, the national Suicide Crisis Helpline.

OBITUARIES



Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of an obituary in this newspaper. Or, you can call us directly at 514 503-1593. Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.



EWART

James "Jim" Allan

DEC. 26, 1936 – AUG. 24, 2026

In his 89th year, Jim passed away peacefully at Lanark Lodge on Friday, August 21, 2026.

Beloved husband of Joanne (née Beaman) for 67 years, and dearly loved father of Peter (Nicole) and Jeffrey (Tuyen). Jim will also be sadly missed by his sister Jeannette Campbell. He was predeceased by his sisters Mildred Rothery and Mary Cameron, and his beloved grandson, Spencer Ewart.

A successful dairy farmer and graduate of the Bachelor of Science in Agriculture program, Jim was also an avid motorcycle enthusiast, deer hunter, and fisherman.

Family and friends are invited to gather and celebrate Jim's life at Lanark Lifestyles, in the Party Room, 31 Eric Devlin Lane, Perth, on Saturday, September 12, from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

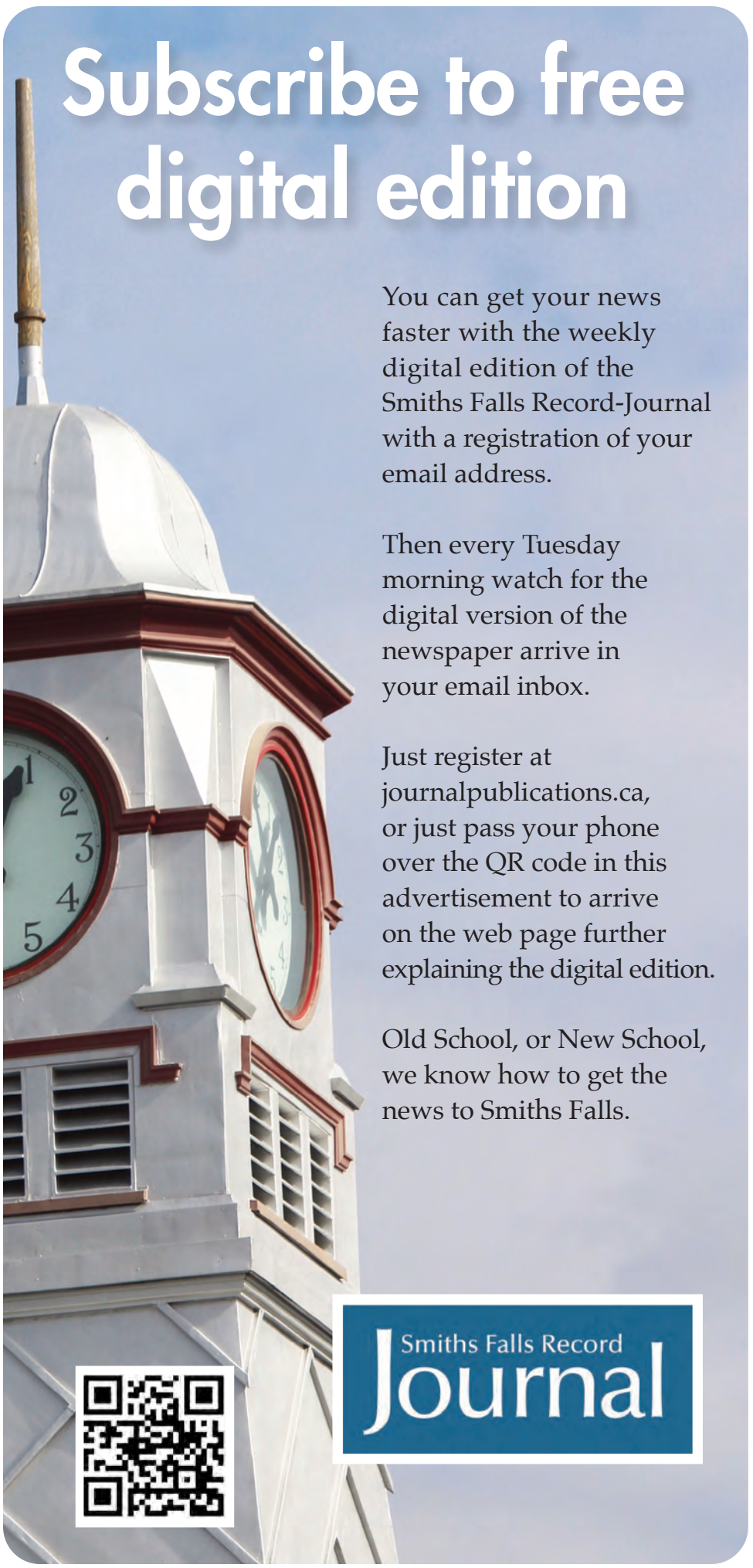
In keeping with Jim's wishes, his ashes will be spread at Redhorse Lake in Ompah, his cherished get-away for more than 60 years, at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations to Lanark Lodge in appreciation of the exceptional care and kindness Jim received would be appreciated.

Bye for now, Jim —
Husband, Dad, and Gramps. ♥

Arrangements are in the care of Blair & Son Funeral Home, Perth.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com



Rideau Lakes looks to cycling tourism to boost rural economy

Rideau Lakes businesses are being encouraged to prepare for what could become a significant new source of tourism spending as plans advance for a 320-kilometre cycling loop through Eastern Ontario.

The township is inviting tourism operators, business owners, community organizations and economic development representatives to a free cycle tourism workshop Tuesday, Sept. 15, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Portland Community Hall, 24 Water St.

The session is part of a five-workshop series being presented by Ontario By Bike and sponsored by partners involved in the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop project and the Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization.

The developing Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop is intended to eventually create a continuous 320-kilometre off-road cycling route connecting portions of the Cataraqui Trail, K&P Trail, Algonquin Trail and Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail.

For Rideau Lakes, the project has particular significance because the proposed route follows the Cataraqui Trail through South Elmsley, Portland, Forfar and Chaffeys Lock, with the potential for cyclists to make side trips into other township communities.

"This workshop gives Rideau Lakes' businesses and community partners practical information they can use now to welcome cyclists and prepare for future growth," said Coun. Marcia Maxwell, chair of the Rideau Lakes Economic Development Committee.

The broader rail-trail project is targeted for completion by 2030 and is being promoted as a multi-day cycling destination capable of drawing visitors through rural communities across Rideau Lakes, Smiths Falls, Lanark, Renfrew and Frontenac counties.

Organizers estimate the completed loop could eventually generate approximately $65 million in direct visitor spending for communities along and near the route.

That could translate into business for restaurants, accommodations, retailers, attractions, cafés and other tourism operators located close to the trail.

Research cited by Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization found that 54 per cent of certified bicycle-friendly businesses responding to a recent Ontario By Bike survey reported an increase in business from cyclists during the previous two years.

Louisa Mursell, executive director of Ontario By Bike and Transportation Options, said cycle tourists can be especially valuable to rural destinations because they often stay longer and spend money on accommodation, food, drinks and other activities.

The Portland workshop will show businesses practical and often inexpensive ways to make themselves more attractive to cyclists.

Participants will learn what cycling tourists look for when deciding where to eat, stay and stop, as well as how businesses can qualify as Ontario By Bike certified bicycle-friendly locations.

The workshop will also examine possible itineraries linking local businesses, attractions and community stories, while identifying gaps in services that could discourage cyclists from stopping or staying overnight.

Those gaps can range from bicycle parking and water-filling locations to repair services, accommodations, food options and clear connections between trails and village businesses.

Organizers say participants do not need cycling expertise to attend.

The meeting is also intended to give local businesses and organizations a chance to influence how the regional cycling route develops rather than waiting until the trail network is completed.

Rideau Lakes already relies heavily on tourism, with its lakes, villages, recreation opportunities and the Rideau Canal and Waterway serving as major attractions.

The cycling initiative represents an attempt to broaden that tourism economy and encourage visitors travelling through the township to stop longer — and spend more money in local communities.

Other workshops are being held in Smiths Falls, Sharbot Lake, Carleton Place and Calabogie.

The Portland session is free, although advance registration is requested.

You can reach Smiths Falls with your newspaper

If you have a message for the residents of Smiths Falls and adjacent townships the most effective way to reach them is an advertisement in this weekly newspaper. For information call today at 613-299-6672. Or reach us by email at: smithsfalls.journal@gmail.com

Rideau Lakes to hear waterfront home, restaurant proposals on September 16

Committee is dealing with non-conforming properties

Two waterfront residential projects and a proposal to add a small reservation-only restaurant to an existing bed and breakfast will come before the Township of Rideau Lakes Planning Advisory and Committee of Adjustment on Sept. 16.

The three applications involve properties in the South Crosby and South Elmsley wards and require planning approvals before the projects can proceed.

At 558B Meadow Lane in South Crosby, property owners Angela Bexten and Ralph Siemsen are seeking permission to expand an existing non-conforming dwelling.

The proposal calls for an 84.1-square-metre, or 905-square-foot, one-storey addition to the side of the existing house. Plans also include a 13.8-square-metre screened room, an 8.2-square-metre covered deck and two uncovered decks totalling 31.1 square metres.

Non-conforming

The existing two-storey house does not meet the township's required 30-metre setback from the water. It currently sits 25.2 metres from the shoreline. The proposed addition, screened room and covered decking would be approximately 28.4 metres from the water at their closest point.

Because the existing home is considered a non-conforming use, permission is required under the Planning Act to expand it. The property is also subject to a separate site plan control application.

A second application involves a waterfront property at 8 R7A in South Elmsley, owned by Sherle Perkins and Heather Perkins-McVey.

The owners are proposing to demolish an existing 100-square-metre, one-storey dwelling and replace it with a new two-storey house measuring approximately 220 square metres, with a 161-square-metre building footprint.

The existing house is only 14 metres from the water, well inside the township's 30-metre waterfront setback, and sits seven metres from the rear property line instead of the required 7.5 metres.

According to the township notice, the replacement home would remain 14 metres from the water and would be approximately 4.5 metres from the rear property line. A new septic system is also proposed.

Like the Meadow Lane application, the project requires permission to expand or replace an existing non-conforming use and is also being reviewed through site plan control.

Restaurant

The third proposal could introduce a new dining option in South Elmsley.

Matthew England and Claire Cole are seeking a zoning amendment for 4 Moran Rd. that would allow part of an existing residence and bed-and-breakfast operation to be used as a restaurant.

The property is currently zoned Rural. The applicants want it rezoned to a Rural Special Exception zone to permit approximately 82.8 square metres, or 891 square feet, of the existing dwelling to operate as a restaurant.

According to the application, the restaurant would operate as an accessory to the existing bed and breakfast and would offer dining on a limited, reservation-only basis for no more than 10 customers at one time.

No physical changes to the building are required to accommodate the proposed restaurant, although the property is also subject to a site plan control application because of the additional commercial use.

All three matters will be considered beginning at 1 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 16, at the Chantry Municipal Office, 1439 County Rd. 8 in Delta. The proceedings will also be livestreamed.

Residents may make written or verbal submissions concerning the applications. The public hearings give neighbours and other interested parties an opportunity to raise planning, environmental, traffic or other concerns before decisions are made.

The applications remain proposals and have not yet received final approval.







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Heritage House Museum building will get more repairs – Page 10

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2026 SMITHS FALLS, ONTARIO SMITHSFALLS.JOURNAL@GMAIL.COM



Smiths Falls Record
Journal

Candidate has questions about Town's water

PAGE 2

Three mayoralty candidates offer competing visions

PAGE 9

In Rideau Lakes, the Lombardy Kioti Rodeo is scheduled for Sept. 25 and 26, bringing two nights of rodeo competition to the Lombardy Agricultural Society grounds.

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But province says water safe

Mayoralty candidate questions water quality

BY DAVID LEONARDO

In this electoral campaign candidate for mayor Nate Morris has placed a question mark on the quality of the Town's drinking water.

He has stopped short of declaring Smiths Falls drinking water unsafe, but has repeatedly questioned whether residents have been given enough information to be confident about its long-term safety.

And he's shifted his 18-month complaint from nearby possible contamination of the Town's water source to lead found in pipes.

He says, "When Mayor Shawn Pankow describes the tap water as '100% safe,' I believe that materially misrepresents a much more complicated reality. Repeated lead exceedances are a legitimate public-health concern, even when the source is partly private plumbing rather than the municipal system itself."

Another shift for Morris is from the Town's water to the home owner's water taps.

He says there is a valid cause for concern especially for some home owners.

"So the precise answer is that I do not think the available evidence supports a blanket statement that all municipal drinking water in Smiths Falls is unsafe. It does, however, show that some residents have had lead levels at their taps above the applicable limit, which I consider a serious public health concern and a valid reason for residents to expect careful monitoring, transparency and action."

Because of the possibility of lead he says, "I personally use a whole-house filtration system and would not feel comfortable drinking the water in my home unfiltered."

Drinking water in compliance

The Town says the drinking water is safe. Its 2025 drinking-water report showed a 100-per-cent provincial inspection rating with no non-compliance issues, according to reporting on the annual report. The town has also stated that treated water meets provincial standards and that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP),has identified no risk to the municipal drinking-water system from the compost-site issue.

There is one wrinkle though: Municipal reporting showed lead exceedances in some private residential samples in 2024, although there were no lead exceedances in the finished-water or distribution-water samples shown in that report.

Contacted by the Record-Journal, Tracy Hart of the MECP, which oversees municipal water systems in the province, confirmed the drinking water is safe here.

She says, "Regular testing of both raw water and treated water at the Smiths Falls Water Treatment Plant consistently meets or exceeds all provincial standards."

Smiths Falls voters will choose a new mayor Oct. 26, with three candidates offering different approaches. *See page 9 for some of their platform.*



Smiths Falls firefighters train with rapid-deployment rescue boat

Anyone who has spotted Smiths Falls firefighters training beside the water with a large inflatable craft may have wondered exactly what it is.

The answer is the FORTUNA Rapid Deployment Craft, or RDC, a specialized inflatable rescue boat designed to be quickly prepared and launched during water emergencies.

The craft is used by the Smiths Falls Fire Department as part of its water-rescue capabilities, giving firefighters a portable platform that can be transported in a compact form and inflated when needed.

While the Fortuna may not look particularly impressive when deflated, firefighters can turn it into a fully operational rescue craft with teamwork, equipment and compressed air.

Department training includes much more than simply operating the boat.

Practice drill

Firefighters practice removing the craft from storage, preparing the equipment, inflating the boat, moving it to the shoreline and safely launching it into the water.

Once deployed, crews also train in manoeuvring the craft and working in conditions they could encounter during an actual emergency.

Regular training is particularly important for water-rescue calls because conditions can change quickly and firefighters may have little time to prepare once they arrive at the scene.

Wind, currents, cold water and poor visibility can all complicate rescue operations, making familiarity with the equipment essential.

The department says repeated training allows firefighters to become comfortable with every stage of deployment so crews can work quickly and efficiently when seconds count.

The Fortuna provides firefighters with another tool for reaching people who may be stranded, injured or otherwise in distress on local waterways.

Smiths Falls firefighters regularly practise with the craft to ensure equipment and crews are ready before an emergency occurs.

The message behind the training is simple: practise today so firefighters are prepared when the next water-rescue call comes in.

SF replaces air conditioner at water treatment plant

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Smiths Falls Town council approved an out-of-budget purchase in the amount of $45,486.72 (including net HST) for the replacement of the failed air conditioning system at the municipal water treatment plant during the August 31 special committee of the whole meeting.

The contract for the purchase, which includes a $5,000 contingency allowance for electrical and roofing work, was awarded to Francis HVAC Services Ltd., of Nepean, one of two firms that supplied quotations for the replacement of the existing water-cooled unit with a new 12.5-ton split air conditioning system prior to the deadline for submissions.

Francis' quoted price – before HST – was $39,700, while RackAir, a commercial HVAC and refrigeration service provider with offices in Kingston and Toronto, submitted a quote of $44,780 (excluding HST).

The quotation submitted by Francis includes the: removal and disposal of the existing equipment; supply and installation of a new Lennox 12.5-ton split air conditioning system; installation of a roof-mounted condensing unit, as well as new refrigerant piping and an evaporator; system start-up, testing and commissioning; and re-use of the current Building Automation System (BAS) controls.

"The existing unit has failed, and serves the second floor of the laboratory, offices, lunchroom, and change room areas. It also operates year-round to maintain suitable temperatures for critical plant equipment and control systems," Andrew MacNaughton, Manager of Water/Wastewater for the Town, told council during the recent C.O.W. session.

"The current system is water-cooled and continuously uses treated drinking water as part of its operation. The proposed replacement is an air-cooled, split system that will restore reliable cooling, while improving operational efficiency and reducing non-revenue water usage within the water treatment plant."

Funding for the new air conditioning system and associated work will be drawn from the Town's Water and Wastewater Capital Reserves.

Election Profile

Kolu campaigns on infrastructure, healthcare and business

Lewis Kolu is seeking one of six council seats in the Oct. 26 Smiths Falls municipal election, saying his campaign will focus on infrastructure, healthcare, entrepreneurship and a municipal government that can respond quickly to changing community needs.

Kolu is one of 15 candidates competing for the six council positions.

"I love Smiths Falls," Kolu said. "Working with various committees and volunteer organizations has shown me the very best our town has to offer. These experiences have given me a deep sense of civic responsibility to Smiths Falls."

Kolu said his platform is built around achievable goals that can produce tangible results.

He identifies continued infrastructure upgrades as one of the most important responsibilities facing the next council. That includes dealing with immediate concerns such as roads and garbage collection while also planning longer-term improvements involving traffic flow, cycling and water infrastructure.

"We need to deal with the problems in front of us while also preparing for the ones farther down the road," he said.

Healthcare is another major part of Kolu's platform.

He wants Smiths Falls to work toward attracting additional medical professionals and healthcare facilities, arguing that expanded local services could reduce travel, costs and stress for residents.

Kolu said he would like Smiths Falls to become a regional leader in medical capacity, serving both local residents and people from surrounding communities.

"Building that capacity would strengthen Smiths Falls as a regional centre and make care more accessible to our community," he said.

More business support

Kolu is also calling for greater support for entrepreneurs and existing businesses.

He said the municipality should make it easier to start a business and eliminate unnecessary barriers that can slow investment or make it more difficult for established businesses to adapt.

"We need a town government that can respond to changing needs without getting stuck in bureaucracy," Kolu said.

His decision to run, however, is also rooted in his personal experience in the community.

Kolu said living in Smiths Falls gave him stability during difficult periods of his life and introduced him to residents and organizations working to improve the town.

He became increasingly involved in volunteer activities, including meeting people connected with REAL Deal shoreline cleanups, Rural FASD's Red Shoe Run and the Falls Food Hub.



Lewis Kolu

Those experiences, he said, encouraged him to become more involved in municipal affairs.

Kolu eventually approached town hall looking for additional ways to volunteer and joined the Equity for All committee, where he has served for the past two years. He has also attended public sessions dealing with a range of municipal issues.

Through that involvement, Kolu said he has gained a clearer understanding of challenges facing Smiths Falls, including food insecurity and pressures expected to confront the community in the years ahead.

Despite those challenges, he believes the town has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to overcome difficult circumstances.

"Smiths Falls does better than many communities with a fraction of those problems," Kolu said. "Why? Because we have smart leadership and people who always come together to support one another, even against stacked odds."

He describes Smiths Falls as an "enduring town full of hope" and an underdog community accustomed to succeeding through determination and cooperation.

Guerin putting food security, affordability at campaign centre — Page 15

Lighthouse Publications

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

Fundraising



Champions for Kids continues helping UCDSB students and families in need

The Upper Canada District School Board's Champions for Kids Foundation is continuing its work to help students across Eastern Ontario take part in activities and meet essential needs when family finances are stretched.

Established in 2008, the charitable foundation provides confidential financial assistance to UCDSB students and their families, with the goal of ensuring children are not excluded from opportunities because of financial hardship.

Support can help pay for sports, music lessons, summer camps and other activities outside school. The foundation also steps in when families face unexpected challenges, helping with needs such as eyeglasses, winter clothing, transportation costs when a child is receiving hospital care and some medical expenses.

$2-million raised

Since its creation, Champions for Kids has raised more than $2 million. A 2024 foundation update put cumulative fundraising at more than $2.6 million, with more than $133,000 distributed to students and families during that year alone.

The fundraising has continued strongly in 2026.

The foundation's 19th annual golf tournament, held July 3 at the Smiths Falls Golf and Country Club, raised more than $72,000 for UCDSB students, according to a foundation update posted Sept. 1.

Another recent fundraiser, the fifth annual Tammy Neddo Memorial Mixed Triples Darts Tournament, raised $3,270. The event brought together players, families and community supporters, with money generated through team fees, shirt sales and a silent auction.

Students are also helping their peers. Earlier this year, students at Almonte District High School raised $540 through their annual bingo fundraiser for Champions for Kids.

Foundation president Laura Oliver says donations come from school fundraising projects, UCDSB employees, community partners and individual supporters. The foundation is operated by a volunteer board, helping keep administrative costs low so more of the money raised can reach children and families.

The foundation serves students throughout the UCDSB region, including schools in communities such as Perth, Smiths Falls, Carleton Place and Mississippi Mills.

Residents, businesses and organizations wishing to support Champions for Kids can donate or learn more through the foundation's website at championsforkids.ucdsb.on.ca.

McDonald's Corners Fall Fair set for Sept. 26

The McDonald's Corners Fall Fair will return on Saturday, Sept. 26, bringing together agriculture, local vendors and community activities for a traditional fall celebration.

The fair will feature livestock shows highlighting the region's agricultural roots, along with local makers offering handmade goods, crafts and other products.

A community barbecue will also be part of the day, giving visitors a chance to enjoy food and socialize with neighbours and friends.

The annual event provides an opportunity for residents and visitors to celebrate rural life while supporting local producers, artisans and community organizations.

Families are encouraged to attend and take in the livestock displays, browse the vendors and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of one of the area's seasonal community gatherings.

The McDonald's Corners Fall Fair takes place Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026.

Abattoir or laboratory? — *Some ideas to chew on*

We've been watching Barbecue Showdown, the Georgia-based series featuring a group of diverse contestants vying to pull off the best "cook" or "smoke." It's like the Great British Baking Show (or Canadian knock-off) but with a southern twang, twist and taste.

For a competition centred on participants hoping to impress judges with the best grilling of pork belly, tomahawk steaks – or squirrel, beaver and alligator in one episode – it's surprisingly classy and illuminating.

But what is notable beyond the drama amid the charcoal haze, is how the show host insists on using the word "protein" to describe any kind of meat. "Contestants, you will have six hours to cook two grilled proteins and three sides. Ready, set, smoke!"

Well, true enough, whether it's got a beak or hooves, all meat is protein (but not all proteins are meat). But what actually is meat and what are we actually eating?

This existential question is becoming more and more relevant with the advent of two things. One is man's increasing ability to create fake meat from plants; the other is man's increasing ability to make fake meat from animal cells.

The stakes are high in the competition between the two processes, but the plant team already may be losing ground. Take, for example, the woes of Beyond Meat, the leading producer of plant-based mock meat.

Beyond Meat is the brainchild of Californian entrepreneur Ethan Brown, who launched his plant-based meat company in 2009 with the express goal of battling climate change by reducing the environmental impact of meat production.

Beyond Meat supplies a bunch of fast food chains with fake meat for burgers and the like, and even makes a burger that appears to bleed like the real rare deal with the clever use of beetroot juice.

Many companies hopped on the fake meat bandwagon including in Canada Maple Leaf Foods with Lightlife and Quebec's Vegeat with its range of plant products from tourtière, to Veggie-Chicken Tenders, to Italian sausages and meatballs.

We don't have recent data for Vegeat, but Beyond Meat sales have slumped by a third of late and Lightlife sales results are described as "neutral" and below projections in a recent company report.

A world-wide study cited in a recent BBC report on the slumping fake meat market, found "that despite 61 per cent of consumers increasing their plant-based intake, 40 per cent are reducing or cutting out fake meat from their diets. Almost half said taste was behind the decision, followed by 36 per cent who cited artificial additives and another 36 per cent who stated it was the processed nature of the products which changed their habits."

3-minutes with
Peter Black
Columnist



And then, of course, in these inflationary times, there's the higher cost of plant-based meat products.

So, if folks are souring on meat made from vegetables, how will they take to meat made from actual meat cells? Readers of Margaret Atwood's Oryx and Crake novel will already be familiar with what potentially lies ahead, meat-wise. In it, characters in the dystopian fantasy munch on ChickieNobs and Bucket'o'Nubbins, made from a monstrous factory-grown pseudo-chicken with no beak or eyes.

Yum, tastes like chicken. Meanwhile in the non-fiction world, ChickieNobs or the like may be coming to supermarkets in the United States soon. The Food and Drug Administration recently approved two companies' "cultivated" chicken-cell-based products for human consumption.

Created by California-based Upside Foods and Good Meat, the former backed by such visionaries as Bill Gates and Richard Branson, the fake chicken is grown from a chicken cell that is put into a large stainless steel tank like a beer vat and then fed with the stuff animals need to grow - food and warmth.

The "chicken" comes out in sheets that are then cut and shaped into such familiar forms as breasts or nuggets.

A recent MSNBC report says there are some 150 companies positioning to join the anticipated cultivated meat rush as the world moves to reduce the environmental impact of producing meat – estimated to contribute 30 to 40 per cent of greenhouse gasses.

One company, SCiFi Foods, wants to begin selling its cultivated beef (mixed with plant matter) to Canada in the near future. Federal officials say they have not yet received any applications to import or produce cultivated meat.

With all this fake meat coming our way eventually, the big looming question is, of course, just how good will cultivated chicken or beef or whatever taste on the barbecue?

UCDSB reports higher grad rates with upward trends

Student achievement is continuing to improve across the Upper Canada District School Board, with graduation rates and other key academic indicators showing an upward trend.

Chief Education Officer Shelley Riddell recently provided trustees with an update on student performance in reading, writing, mathematics and overall student success.

Data from the 2025-26 school year shows achievement measures, including Education Quality and Accountability Office test results and graduation rates, continue to improve across the board.

Riddell said the UCDSB's overall graduation rate has now reached 91.7 per cent, continuing a steady increase over the past three years.

For the 2026-27 school year, the board plans to focus on teaching strategies shown through data to have the greatest impact on student learning and academic growth.

Those strategies include strengthening fluency in foundational mathematics skills, increasing the use of small-group instruction and using shorter learning cycles that allow educators to quickly identify student needs, respond with appropriate supports, review progress and adjust instruction when required.

The board will also place additional emphasis on attendance and student engagement, particularly at the secondary school level.

Officials say helping students successfully manage transitions between semesters will be another priority, allowing educators to identify concerns early and provide support before attendance, engagement or academic challenges become significant barriers to success.

Board chair Jamie Schoular praised students and educators for the improved results in reading, writing and mathematics.

Schoular also thanked families for the role they play in supporting student learning outside the classroom.

SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

TOWN PAGE

SMITHS FALLS

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2026

As of September 1, 2026, all voters can ensure that their names and relevant information are correct on the voters' list. To be added, deleted or to make any other corrections to their information, please contact Giselle Nayel at ***613-283-4124 Ext. 1125*** or ***gnayel@smithsfalls.ca***. Identification and proof of residence is required. (learn more: ***smithsfalls.ca/election***) Amendments can be made during normal office hours beginning September 1 up to and including the close of voting on October 26 at 8 p.m.

RECYCLING & GARBAGE REMINDERS

Recycling collection in Smiths Falls is managed by Circular Materials, with pickup provided locally by Miller Waste Systems (TOPPS Environmental Solutions).

You can recycle more than ever, including:

✔️ Flexible plastics (plastic bags, chip bags, bubble wrap)
✔️ Foam packaging (meat trays, takeout containers, cups)
✔️ Tubes (toothpaste, deodorant, hand cream)

Not sure where cartons go? Milk, cream, juice and other beverage cartons belong in your container box, not with paper products. Recycling must be placed at the curb by 7 AM on your scheduled collection day to ensure pickup. If your recycling has been missed, or if you require a bin replacement or have collection questions, please contact Miller Waste directly at ***1-888-852-2374*** or ***area2@millerwaste.ca***. For a list of acceptable materials, visit: ***circularmaterials.ca/smithsfalls***.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

September 21, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council 5 PM
September 28, 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting 5 PM
Attend in person at Town Hall (77 Beckwith Street North)
or view live streamed proceedings on:
Facebook - facebook.com/townofsmithsfalls
YouTube - Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
For Council, Committee and Board meeting agendas, visit:
smithsfalls.ca/meeting





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Drivers urged to share rural roads as harvest season arrives



With harvest season getting underway across Eastern Ontario, motorists are being reminded to slow down and use extra caution as tractors, combines and heavily loaded farm wagons return to rural roads.

Farmers frequently need to travel public roads to move equipment between fields and transport crops during the fall harvest. That can put machinery travelling at a fraction of normal highway speeds alongside cars and trucks.

Ontario's Ministry of Transportation advises drivers who encounter farm machinery to slow down, remain well back and wait until it is safe to pass. Farm equipment can be exceptionally wide or long, and operators may have difficulty seeing vehicles approaching from behind.

Another potential danger occurs when farm machinery turns into a field or driveway. A tractor that appears to be moving toward the right side of the road may actually need additional space before making a wide left turn.

Motorists should avoid assuming an equipment operator is pulling over to let them pass.

Ontario law requires farm tractors, self-propelled farm equipment and other vehicles unable to maintain speeds greater than 40 km/h to carry the familiar orange-and-red slow-moving vehicle sign when travelling on a highway, with limited exceptions.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture renewed its road-safety message in May, reminding motorists and farmers to share the road and make safety a priority. The organization says federal data indicates slow-moving vehicles are 3.8 to 4.8 times more likely to be involved in a fatal collision per kilometre travelled than other motor vehicles.

The federation also notes that many collisions involving farm machinery occur during daylight and in otherwise good road conditions — another reminder that visibility alone does not eliminate the danger.

Extra following distance

Drivers should leave extra following distance, avoid distractions and never attempt to pass on a hill, curve or anywhere there is insufficient visibility. Patience is particularly important when equipment is too wide or heavy to safely move onto the shoulder.

Farmers, meanwhile, are encouraged to make sure lights, reflective markings and slow-moving vehicle signs are clearly visible and to signal their intentions when turning.

Harvest season means long hours for agricultural producers across Lanark County and Eastern Ontario.

For motorists, encountering a tractor or combine may add several minutes to a trip. Slowing down, staying back and waiting for a safe opportunity to pass can help ensure both farmers and drivers reach their destinations safely.

Lanark County farmers invited to OFA regional meeting Oct. 8

Farmers and agricultural community members from across Lanark County will have an opportunity to discuss local priorities and help shape the direction of Ontario's largest general farm organization when the Ontario Federation of Agriculture holds its annual regional meeting next month.

The 2026 OFA Regional Meeting for Lanark County is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 8, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Lanark Civitan Hall, 2144 Pine Grove Road in Lanark.

The meeting is part of a province-wide series of gatherings organized by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture to give members a chance to connect with fellow farmers, discuss issues affecting agriculture and provide input on priorities facing the industry.

According to the OFA, regional meetings allow members to learn more about the work of their local federation, meet their provincial director and member service representative and raise concerns directly with agricultural leaders.

Eligible OFA members will also have an opportunity to elect local representatives to the organization's Policy Advisory Council and select delegates for the OFA's 2026 annual general meeting, which is scheduled for Nov. 24 and 25 in Toronto.

The meetings come at a time when Ontario farmers continue to deal with issues ranging from rising production costs and changing markets to farmland protection, rural infrastructure, labour availability and government regulations.

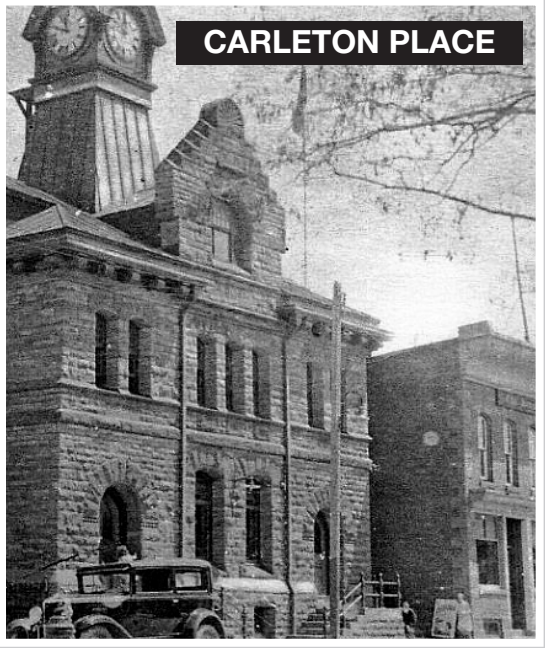
The OFA describes itself as a grassroots organization and says input gathered through regional meetings helps local federations and the provincial organization advocate on behalf of Ontario agriculture.

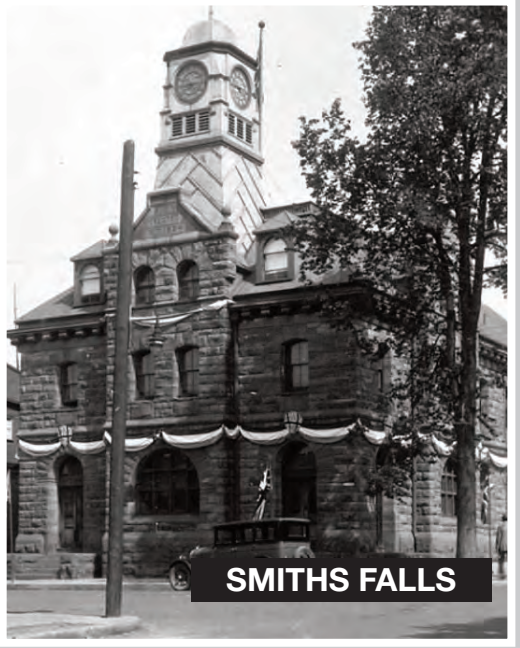
Members interested in attending the Lanark County meeting or seeking information about registration or election nominations can contact their local OFA Member Service Representative through the organization's website.

Our History

Remembering the post office of our communities







BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON

Remember visiting the local post office to pick up your mail?

For those in rural areas it might have been a small counter inside a general store, or in more populated places it was often a grand old building on the main street of town. Whether the structure was large or small, a trip to the post office typically came with a sense of anticipation. Would there be mail for you? Perhaps a letter from a relative or pen-pal, a popular magazine, a mail-order catalogue, a greeting card, or a postcard from faraway places, might be waiting in your mailbox.

Carleton Place

Although the Old Federal building at 79-81 Bridge Street in Carleton Place served the town as the post office and customs house for nearly eight decades, the very first post office was established in 1830, and housed in a variety of local businesses. By 1890, an era of booming enterprise created largely by local lumber and railroad operations, there was a need for a more permanent base. Designed by Thomas Fuller, the Chief Architect of the Dominion of Canada, the post office was completed in 1892. The handsome 2 ½ story structure, built in a Romanesque Revival style from local limestone, was inscribed with "V.R.", a tribute to Queen Victoria, reigning monarch at that time. In 1913 the building's iconic clock tower was added featuring a 150 lb pendulum and an 800 lb. brass bell. By 1970 the building was showing its age, and the grand old post office was decommissioned and service was moved to a modern facility.

Smiths Falls

In Smiths Falls, the old post office, located on Russell Street East, is perhaps one of the town's most prominent and stately landmarks. Like its neighbour in Carleton Place, the impressive structure was designed by Thomas Fuller, an architect famous for his creation of Canada's original Parliament Buildings in Ottawa. Constructed in Fuller's signature style for public buildings, the Romanesque Revival post office was completed in 1894. Local red-brown sandstone, on a foundation of Beckwith limestone, the structure features accents of red sandstone trim and handsome semi-circular archways. Its clock tower was added in 1915, and during the building's time as a post office, there were two major renovations completed in order to keep pace with increasing volumes of mail requiring sorting and processing for a dozen mail routes. The post office closed in 1964 with operations migrating to modern facilities. In 1978, the magnificent old building was recognized for its historical value and received a formal heritage designation. After many decades passing through a series of owners, the building was purchased by local businessman, Bruce Linton, in 2018, and a restoration project was completed, preserving many of the historic original features.

Perth post office

In Perth, the functions of the post office were based in shared quarters inside the Perth Town Hall, and local customs agents operated from a separate downtown building. It was not until the Great Depression that the federal government decided to build a post office in Perth as one of their public works projects. Built in 1932 at 81 Gore Street, the new post office was designed in a plain Classical Revival style, implementing a smooth sandstone finish. The main floor was chiefly used as the public postal service counter, with a sorting facility for rural mail located in the basement. The building also housed the Canada Customs office on the second floor, rental offices and a caretaker's accommodations. This busy post office was a hive of activity for forty years until it was decommissioned and closed in 1972. A new facility was established outside of the downtown business area. The old post office was purchased by local businessman, Glenn Crain for his real estate and insurance operations.

These splendid old post offices served their towns proudly and were silent witnesses through an evolution of time marked by both peace and war. Over the years these grand old buildings provided safe-keeping and delivery of letters to brave soldiers serving overseas, Christmas correspondence asking Santa Claus for a special toy, and elegant printed invitations to weddings and anniversary celebrations. They processed delivery for official government documents, catalogues from Eaton and Sears, the Old Farmer's Almanac, bills, and local flyers. For many, a trip to the post office was often the highlight of the day. Whether to purchase stamps, post some mail, or share a few pleasant words with the friendly staff, the local post offices played a vital role in our local history and these handsome structures stand today as a lasting legacy of our architectural heritage.

* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

3 candidates offer competing visions for Smiths Falls mayor's chair

Smiths Falls voters will choose a new mayor Oct. 26, with three candidates offering different approaches to affordability, growth, municipal spending, policing, housing and the future direction of town hall.

The candidates are Christopher G. Cummings, Peter McKenna and Nate Morris. Mayor Shawn Pankow is not seeking another term after nearly 12 years in the mayor's chair.

Voting will be conducted by internet and telephone from Oct. 19 until 8 p.m. Oct. 26.

Morris will dismiss CAO



Nate Morris

Morris is campaigning on drinking water and lower utility bills, housing and affordability, performance-based budgeting, police and bylaw reform, Rideau Canal revitalization and affordable climate action.

Water has been central to his campaign. Morris has raised concerns about environmental contamination within the drinking-water intake protection area and wants remaining lead service lines identified and replaced.

He also wants greater scrutiny of municipal spending before taxes or utility rates increase.

Morris proposes performance-based budgeting, requiring departments to establish objectives, costs and measurable outcomes so council and taxpayers can see what municipal spending produces.

His platform would also bring significant administrative changes. Using Strong Mayor powers, Morris says he would move in his first 100 days toward replacing the current chief administrative officer, appointing an interim CAO and separating the roles of town solicitor and integrity commissioner.

He is calling for stronger civilian oversight of policing, a review of whether the municipal police service provides value for money and more consistent bylaw enforcement.

Other proposals include faster building permits, more affordable youth recreation, restoration of the Rideau waterway and advocacy for a guaranteed basic income pilot.

Cummings stresses his experience, financial management, collegiality

Cummings is campaigning on his experience in municipal government, banking, economic development and community organizations.

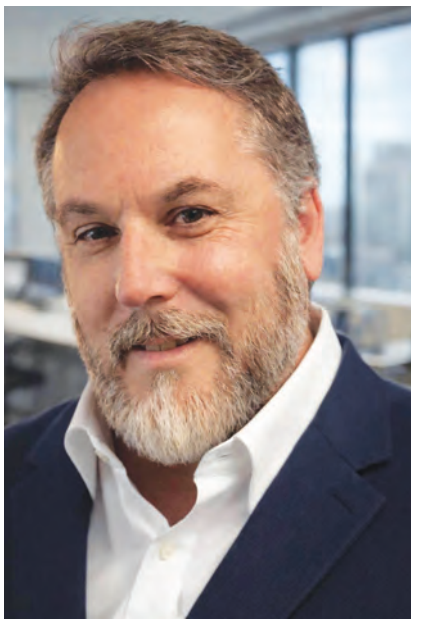
A Smiths Falls resident for more than 30 years, he served three terms on council from 2006 to 2018 and recently retired following a 40-year career that included business banking and financial advising.

His campaign emphasizes financial responsibility, economic development, housing, healthcare and maintaining core municipal services.

Cummings says affordability is among the most pressing challenges facing residents as municipalities deal with rising infrastructure and service costs.

On housing, he supports a broader range of options, including affordable rentals, attainable home ownership and housing for seniors. He says his experience working with developers, contractors, homebuilders and real estate professionals would help encourage development.

Healthcare is also a priority. Cummings says municipalities cannot solve shortages alone but can help recruit professionals, advocate for provincial investment and work with healthcare organizations.



Christoper Cummings

His leadership philosophy is summarized by four words: listen, collaborate, advocate and act. He has also stressed council's oversight role, saying elected officials must closely examine costs, risks and results when approving spending.

McKenna focus is on gentle advocacy and collaboration

McKenna, who has served eight years on council, is campaigning on a six-part platform centred on advocacy, collaborative leadership, financial planning, recreation, infrastructure and economic development.

He says many of Smiths Falls' challenges cannot be solved by the town alone and promises to advocate at Lanark County and with provincial and federal governments for funding and partnerships.

McKenna says he would work with community agencies and other governments to expand deeply affordable housing and improve social and health services. He points to more than 800 housing units built during his eight years on council, including affordable and rent-geared-to-income units.



Peter McKenna

He also supports continued advocacy for affordable childcare and services for children, seniors, families and vulnerable residents.

"I believe the best leadership is collaborative leadership," his platform states.

McKenna says he would emphasize respectful relationships between council, staff, residents, businesses and community organizations.

On finances, he supports responsible budgeting, long-term planning and strategic investment while seeking outside funding to reduce pressure on local taxpayers.

Infrastructure is another major priority. McKenna says roads, water and wastewater systems and public facilities must be renewed before small problems become more expensive. He points to more than $100 million in infrastructure improvements in Smiths Falls over the past six years, supported partly by provincial and federal funding.

He also supports moving the proposed Regional Recreation Facility forward, continued improvements to Lower Reach Park, trails and waterfront areas, and protecting neighbourhoods, heritage and green spaces as the town grows.

On economic development, McKenna wants additional employment lands, continued support for downtown businesses and major employers such as Hershey's, and continued work on the town's Business Retention and Expansion strategy.

Heritage House Museum building will get more repairs

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL



For the second time in less than a year, Smiths Falls town council has approved a Heritage Alteration Permit-related series of repairs to the Heritage House Museum.

The latest upgrades – the replacement of the siding, 16 window frames and sills on the main (yellow) house, as well as the installation of two new furnaces with two additional condensers – were approved during the September 8 committee of the whole meeting and officially authorized with the passing of a resolution at the council meeting that immediately followed.

The resolution was passed under Section 33 (6) of the Ontario Heritage Act.

According to a staff report prepared by the Town's Planning Clerk Marie Elmsley and presented by the Town's Director of Management Services Karl Grenke, all repairs will be carried out using "like-for-like materials, colour and design," while the condensers will be "placed at the back of the building as discreetly as possible" in order to preserve the structure's historical appearance.

Grenke pointed out that a Heritage Alteration Application was submitted by the Community Services Department "to accommodate these repairs," the application was subsequently considered by the Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) on August 18, and that the Committee then recommended "that council support it."

He also referred to the previous set of repairs authorized by council last fall through a similar process "on a different part of the building."

According to a staff report from Elmsley that was presented at the Nov. 3, 2025 committee of the whole meeting, those upgrades pertained to the "repair and restoration of wood siding, soffits, fascia, balconies, and associated painting" to the red building that is part of the mid-19th century Heritage House located at 11 Old Slys Rd.

Elmsley's report stated that the restoration work was "required due to age-related deterioration, including rotting wood siding and balcony components," and that it was "necessary to bring the building up to acceptable standards for this prominent Heritage property."

Her report regarding the latest set of repairs states that the siding and wooden window frames and sills on the main building "are failing from rot," and that the furnaces are over 30 years old and "need to be replaced."

Councillor Jay Brennan commended his colleagues for their efforts in preserving the local landmark.

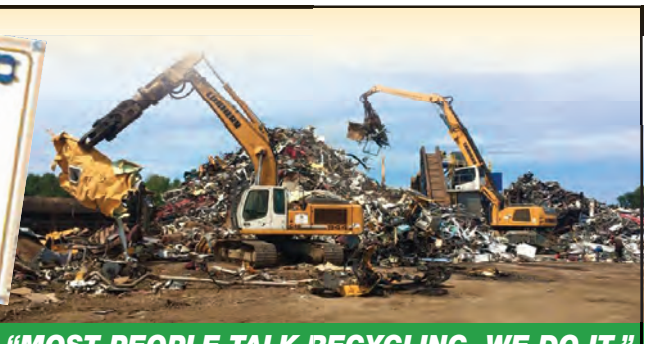
"I must say that this term, council has been very, very supportive of the Heritage House. I don't remember as much… attention being paid to it in all my time (four terms) here (on council)," he said.

"I really appreciate council's support of the museum, and I know staff over there (at the Heritage House) do as well."

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142352

At Town's behest

Subway overpass sees repairs by railway cie.

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Discussions regarding ownership, structural integrity, and responsibility-related matters pertaining to the Chambers Street subway/underpass in Smiths Falls' east-end Atironto neighbourhood continue between municipal staff and Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) railway officials, according to Town CAO Malcolm Morris.

"I wanted to take an opportunity to provide a verbal update on some of the conservations that have been occurring with our friends at the Canadian Pacific Kansas City railway," Morris said during the CAO/Directors Verbal Reports segment of the September 8 special committee of the whole meeting.

"There's been a bit of attention on the Chambers Street grade-separated crossing (the subway). I just want to assure council and the public that …it's an active file. We're working on two fronts related to that crossing."

One "front" pertains to the structural stability of the crossing/overhead train bridge, while the other involves ownership/responsibility.

Morris explained that the Calgary-based railway sent an "engineering technical crew" at the end of June to conduct an inspection of the subway, and that the group returned the following month to do some minor repairs.

The Town's Director of Public Works and Utilities, Paul McMunn, described what those repairs entailed.

"They removed the pieces that were delaminated from the mass concrete of the approaches coming into the underpass, as well as some pieces that were underneath the bridge proper," said McMunn, who during the May 4 C.O.W. session told council that "very high level" conversations about Chambers Street subway matters were taking place among Town staff, CPKC representatives and federal authorities.

"I think they put some netting up as well…But they did address some of our immediate concerns," regarding appearance.

Following that touch-up work and the inspection, the CAO told council that the railway's engineering team "confirmed to us that they feel that the structure is stable. There's no risk in their mind of failure, although, admittedly, from an aesthetic point of view, it…could be improved."

He added that, "structurally, which I think is most important, it is sound."

Discussions regarding ownership of the subway and surrounding properties led to an unexpected revelation.

"On a typical rail crossing, the rail authority owns the suspended structure that the tracks sit on, and everything that supports that structure…and is responsible to maintain it. And in a typical circumstance, the road authority, in this case the Town, would own the approaches to the grade-separated crossing," said the CAO.

"This one's a little bit different. And we've unearthed some records from 1914 to 1916 (when the subway was constructed) that might suggest this installation is a little bit different than a typical one. We have not been able to prove that, but we've done some research."

Morris added that the Town has retained legal counsel to help "sort through that information," and that the municipality has also "reached out to" the Canadian Transportation Agency which "will facilitate a dispute between a railway and a road authority, or an adjacent landowner," if required, and is also "a quasi-judicial body that can render a decision" on a dispute.

"We hope we can work it out, but there is that lever that we could pull if we needed to, to bring clarity," said Morris.

"I just want to assure council that we're looking at the history behind that installation to understand who owns what, and then we can decide on what type of remedial work might be necessary, once we do determine that."

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Quebec and France are pushing for Alto

Cadence consortium has overlapping ownership ties

The consortium chosen to help develop Canada's proposed $60-billion-to-$90-billion high-speed railway is routinely described as a Canadian-led team of six companies, but corporate ownership records show several members are connected through common shareholders and most have strong Quebec ties.

Cadence was selected by the federal government in February 2025 as the private developer partner for Alto, the proposed high-speed railway between Toronto and Quebec City.

Its members are CDPQ Infra, Atkins-Réalis, SYSTRA Canada, Air Canada, Keolis Canada and SNCF Voyageurs.

Cadence describes itself as an international group led from Canada with expertise in financing, designing, constructing, operating and maintaining major transportation projects.

However, the six names do not represent six completely separate ownership groups.

Two organizations in particular — Quebec-based La Caisse and France's state-owned SNCF Group — have ownership interests extending across several Cadence partners.

CDPQ Infra is wholly owned by La Caisse, formerly the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec.

La Caisse manages pension and insurance funds for Quebec's public and parapublic sectors. As of June 30, 2026, it reported approximately $552 billion in net assets, with the Quebec Pension Plan its largest depositor.

But CDPQ Infra is not La Caisse's only connection to Cadence.

La Caisse also owns 30 per cent of Keolis, the international public transportation operator included in the consortium. The remaining 70 per cent is owned by France's SNCF Group.

There is a third connection.

As of March 23, 2026, La Caisse owned approximately 16.71 per cent of Montreal-based AtkinsRéalis, representing about 27.4 million shares.

AtkinsRéalis' 2026 proxy circular says La Caisse was the only shareholder known to hold more than 10 per cent of its voting shares at that date. Under an investors' rights agreement, La Caisse also retains certain rights while its ownership remains above specified thresholds, including the ability to recommend a board nominee while holding at least 10 per cent.

That means La Caisse has either full ownership or a significant financial interest in three of Cadence's six partners — CDPQ Infra, Keolis and AtkinsRéalis.

Same for French side

A similar pattern exists on the French side.

SNCF Group is not a privately owned railway company. Its parent, SNCF SA, is wholly owned by the French government.

Cadence member SNCF Voyageurs is wholly owned by SNCF Group and operates passenger rail services, including high-speed trains.

SNCF also owns 70 per cent of Keolis, placing Keolis at the intersection of the two major ownership groups: 70 per cent SNCF and 30 per cent La Caisse.

SNCF has another connection through SYSTRA, the international rail engineering group whose Canadian operation is part of Cadence.

In October 2024, Latour Capital and Fimalac acquired a 58-per-cent interest in SYSTRA. SNCF and Paris public transit organization RATP each retained about 20 per cent, with the remaining two per cent held by SYSTRA employees.

RATP is itself a French public transportation organization owned by the French state.

SNCF therefore has ownership interests involving three Cadence members: SNCF Voyageurs, Keolis and SYSTRA.

The ownership structure does not mean Cadence is controlled by one company, nor does it demonstrate anything improper about Ottawa's selection of the consortium.

Cadence competed against two other shortlisted teams during a procurement process that began with industry consultations in 2022. Three consortiums submitted proposals in July 2024.

Federal officials evaluated the bids on technical plans, ability to deliver the project, Indigenous participation, development and construction approaches, value for money and cost effectiveness.

Cadence received the highest overall score. BDO Canada served as independent fairness monitor, and the federal government reported that the process it observed was fair, open and transparent.

Understanding the ownership relationships is nevertheless important because Cadence is not simply providing occasional advice.

The consortium was selected to work with the federal Crown corporation during the co-development phase, helping determine the railway's alignment, design, technical specifications, schedule and eventual target cost.

Ottawa has committed $3.9 billion over six years to development and pre-construction. That funding includes more than payments to Cadence, covering engineering, design, environmental assessments, Indigenous consultation, land-related work and Alto's own project activities.

If Ottawa ultimately approves construction, Cadence is positioned to take a central role in final design, financing, construction and operation.

$60 to $90 billion

Alto estimates the complete high-speed network could cost between $60 billion and $90 billion in 2024 dollars, although it stresses that figure remains an early planning estimate rather than an approved budget or construction contract.

The federal government would retain ownership of the railway assets, while financing is expected to include public investment, private capital and future fare revenue.

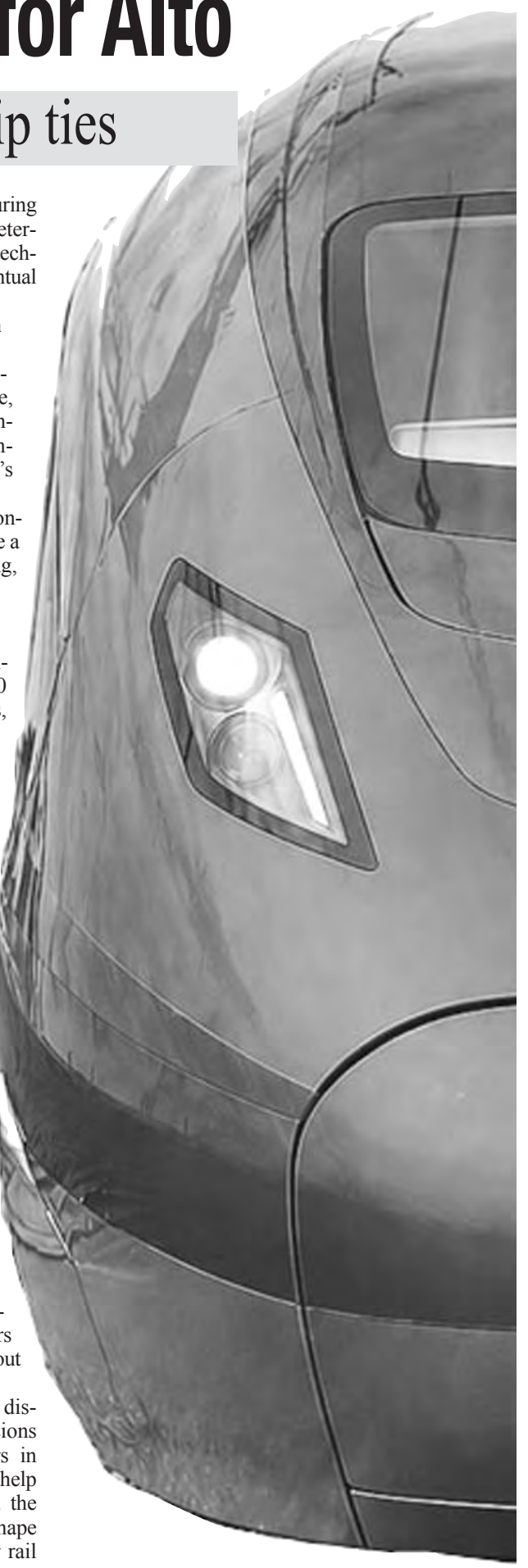
For communities debating Alto, including those in Lanark County that could be affected by a possible Toronto-to-Ottawa alignment, the ownership structure adds another dimension.

Corporate concentration

Cadence may contain six recognizable corporate names, but the ownership behind them is more concentrated than the list initially suggests.

La Caisse owns CDPQ Infra outright, 30 per cent of Keolis and 16.71 per cent of AtkinsRéalis. French state-owned SNCF owns SNCF Voyageurs outright, 70 per cent of Keolis and about 20 per cent of SYSTRA.

Those relationships are publicly disclosed. As Alto moves toward decisions involving tens of billions of dollars in potential construction spending, they help identify who sits financially behind the private consortium selected to help shape Canada's largest proposed passenger rail project.



Your Health

There us a possible link between gut health and MS

Researchers at Germany's Max Planck Institute have identified two specific species of gut bacteria that appear capable of helping trigger the immune response involved in multiple sclerosis (MS). Experts caution that this does not mean they have discovered a single cause of the disease. MS is thought to arise from a complex interplay of genetic, immune and environmental factors, with obesity and infection from the Epstein-Barr virus among those linked to increased risk.

MS affects around three million people worldwide, causing loss of sight and balance, crippling fatigue, problems walking and, in severe cases, paralysis. In patients with MS, a fatty substance called myelin which coats and protects the nerve fibres is damaged when the immune system mistakenly attacks the cells. There is no cure and doctors are increasingly concerned that more young people are being diagnosed. Women are around two-and-a-half times more likely to be affected than men. Canada has the highest prevalence of MS in the world, with 291 cases per 100,000 people.

Academics from the Max Planck Institute studied sets of twins, where one twin had MS and the other didn't. Using twins who had been raised together allowed the researchers to discount genetic or environmental factors. After studying bacteria in stool samples and in the small intestine, they identified two microbes which were only found in the stomachs of the twins with MS. When these bacteria were fed to specially bred mice, the animals were far more likely to develop MS-like symptoms. Experts say there are simple steps people can take to boost their gut health and reduce the likelihood of MS, such as dumping ultra-processed foods in favour of a varied diet full of fibre, fresh fruit and vegetables.

MS affects around three million people worldwide, causing loss of sight and balance, crippling fatigue, problems walking



Walk to reduce your back pain

If you're one of the many adults who experience back pain, you know how much it can interfere with everyday life. Back pain can extend far beyond physical discomfort; it can affect your mental and emotional well-being, too. Spending long stretches in the same position can place stress on your joints and soft tissues, while also reducing muscle activity. Over time, that inactivity may contribute to stiffness, weakness and poor posture. Physical therapists say one of the simplest things you can do for your back is to go for a walk. Taking a daily walk has been shown to reduce back pain. Even short walks can be a worthwhile place to start. Plus, you don't necessarily have to squeeze in one long walk to reap the potential benefits. Research suggests that accumulating walking time throughout the day may be beneficial.

Fruit: fresh or frozen?

Frozen fruit is generally just as nutritious as fresh fruit, and in some cases, it may even retain more nutrients due to rapid freezing at peak ripeness. Most fruit, whether frozen or fresh, is an excellent source of nutrition, containing vitamins, minerals and fiber. However, some fruits change texture once frozen, coming out of the freezer soft and soggy. Peaches are an example of a fruit that drastically changes texture once frozen. However, frozen peaches work well in cobblers, smoothies and baked goods. Frozen pineapple is also great for smoothies or for cooked dishes where texture is less important, such as desserts. Experts recommend buying fresh pineapple when texture matters.

When avocados are frozen, the water inside their cells forms ice crystals, which can rupture cell walls and lead to a mushier texture after thawing. This can result in a slightly watery avocado after thawing, and no one wants watery guacamole.

Strawberries are another fruit that most experts would recommend you buy fresh if you plan to eat them on their own. Frozen and thawed strawberries lose their firmness and become noticeably softer and wetter, but they are perfect for smoothies, oatmeal, yogurt or baking. Frozen mango is great for smoothies, baked goods or sauces, but fresh mango is the better choice for dishes like fruit salads and salsas.

Election Profile

Guerin putting food security, affordability at campaign centre

Marie-Pierre Guerin is seeking one of six council seats in the Oct. 26 Smiths Falls municipal election, campaigning on a platform focused on food security, affordability, local economic resilience and more productive use of municipal land.

Guerin is among 15 candidates competing for the six council positions.

She says rising living costs have made food security and affordability issues that municipal leaders can no longer afford to overlook.

"My top priority is building a food secure and resilient, affordable Smiths Falls by putting Town resources directly to work for all of us," Guerin said. "With inflation driving up the cost of living, municipal leadership needs to focus more on food security and affordability."

Her platform centres on four initiatives, beginning with expanding opportunities for residents to grow and preserve their own food.



Marie-Pierre Guerin

Guerin proposes reviving what she describes as the town's three underused community gardens and working with community organizations, schools and local farmers to develop gardening and food preservation programs.

Food opportunities

The goal, she said, would be to give Smiths Falls residents greater opportunities to grow, harvest, preserve and exchange food with their neighbours, helping families reduce grocery costs while building stronger community connections.

Guerin also wants the municipality to place greater emphasis on supporting local agriculture, micro-farmers, food producers, small businesses and co-operatives.

She argues that encouraging residents to buy and produce more locally would help keep money circulating within Smiths Falls and the surrounding region.

Energy and utility costs are another part of her platform.

Guerin proposes "greening" municipal rooftops as a way of reducing heating and cooling expenses while demonstrating environmental leadership. She says such projects could help lower municipal operating costs, protect infrastructure and ultimately save taxpayers money.

Her fourth priority focuses on municipal land.

Guerin wants the town to examine unused public properties and replace some decorative grass with edible perennial plants, berry bushes and community fruit orchards.

She said those areas could provide publicly accessible fresh produce while reducing reliance on conventional landscaping.

"My platform delivers immediate, common-sense solutions that will lower living costs, strengthen our local economy, and protect our environment at the same time," Guerin said.

She added that, if elected, she intends to bring "fresh food, real representation and common sense solutions to Smiths Falls Council."

Voting Day is Monday, Oct. 26. The Smiths Falls election will be conducted entirely through internet and telephone voting, allowing eligible electors to cast their ballots remotely.

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- Recreation/Sports
- Community Service
- Business/Industry
- Tourism
- Arts/Culture
- Philanthropy

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Award details, including the nomination form can be found online at www.lanarkcounty.ca

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Completed applications and/or questions may be addressed to:

Lanark County Clerk's Office
c/o Megan Beson, Deputy Clerk
99 Christie Lake Road, Perth, ON K7H 3C6
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Email: mbeson@lanarkcounty.ca

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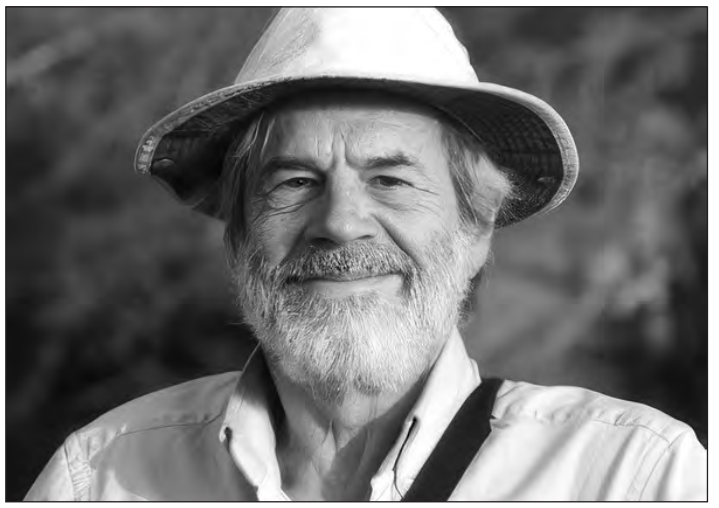


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OBITUARIES

HUNTER
William Ira

SEPTEMBER 1, 1951 – AUGUST 16, 2026



Ira passed away at Kingston General Hospital on August 16th 2026. He was born September 1, 1951 in Smith's Falls, Ontario. He is predeceased by his parents Bill and Helen Hunter and brother Carl. Loving soulmate of Allison Rutter for over 40 years. They were reunited at Dollar Bills in downtown Kingston in 1983. In his words "Big fluffy snowflakes were falling as we walked the mile home engaged in lively conversation which was typical of the many to follow on our journeys together to many exotic and/or faraway places".

Travel destinations included India, France, Austria, Germany, Mexico, Costa Rica, Australia and the United Arab Emirates. Their many adventures often involved camping and back packing. From 2015 to 2025 Ira travelled extensively in the United States with Allison and their beloved standard poodles, Che and then Frida, in the van he beautifully converted for their travels. The conversion of the van is only one example of Ira's ingenuity; he was a skilled craftsman and artist and the van is one of his many projects. Ira also enjoyed hiking, yoga, chess, investing in the financial markets and was a member of the Skeet and Trap Club.

Ira attended Trent University where he obtained his BA in Psychology and subsequently obtained his Residential Counsellor Certificate from Rideau Regional Centre. He moved to Kingston in 1983 and worked at Ongwanada Hospital. His career in social services continued in Toronto, Ottawa, and Sydney Australia. In 1995 they returned to Canada and settled in Kingston. Ira became an Education Assistant at the Limestone School Board and helped countless students and educators.

He will be forever loved and missed by Allison, his sister Norma (Don), brother Owen (Laura) and his nieces and nephew, Lara, Sarah, Vanessa and Todd as well as his sister-in-law Heather (John) and nieces and nephew Sarah, Emily and Jonathan. His kind heart and strength touched many lives and he will be missed by his many friends.

Thank you to the CBI community nurses and the doctors and nurses at KGH for their excellent care and compassion.

A celebration of life will be held at the River Mill Restaurant, 2 Cataraqui St. Kingston on Saturday, October 24th from 1:00-3:00 pm.



Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of an obituary in this newspaper. Or, you can call us directly at 514-503-1593. Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.

GIBSON
Eunice Beverley

NOVEMBER 18, 1935 – SEPTEMBER 5, 2026



Eunice passed peacefully into the presence of her Lord and Saviour in St. Thomas on Saturday September 5th, 2026 in her 91st year.

She was the cherished wife of Harris Gibson (1932-2016) for almost 60 years. Eunice was predeceased by her parents Norman and Myrtle (Lawson) Pegg, her dear infant son Kevin (1957), and her daughter, Margaret (2025).

She is lovingly remembered by her children:

- Myles (Anna) and children Emily, Luke, Maurita and Kent.
- Bruce (Julie) and son Marshall.
- Brian (Ann) and children Kevin (Angelina) & daughter Adeline; Lisa (Jacob) & daughter Ivy; Sarah (Jesse) & children Wyatt & Katie;
- Howard (Michele) and children Nathan (Greg); Alexa (Patrick) & daughters Sybil & Cora; Maxine (Devin) & daughters Kennedy & Camren.

She was a dear sister to the late Douglas (Julia) Pegg, and the late Lois Evans, and will be greatly missed by her nieces and nephews and cousins as well as in-laws Frank (the late Winnifred) Hayhoe, Lois (Ken) Beach, Marjorie (Don) Healey, and Murray (June) Gibson.

Eunice loved her log house: short walks outside, looking at the lake, and sitting by the fireplace. Her home was filled with music; her singing and whistling were expressions of joy and worship as she worked, served and welcomed family, neighbours and dear friends over the years. Her faith was not only her foundation, but her song.

Family and friends may pay their respects during visitation on Sunday September 13, 2026 from 2 to 4 p.m. at Blair & Son Funeral Home, 112 Beckwith Street North, Smiths Falls.

Funeral service will be held on Monday, September 14, 2026, at 11 a.m. at the Blair & Son Smiths Falls Funeral Chapel. There will be a reception to follow. Interment at Lombardy Union Cemetery.

In memory of Eunice, donations may be made to Gideons International in Canada through this link: https://sharewordglobal.com/give

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Obituaries



BENNETT
Ellen Jane

OCT. 10, 1946 – SEPT. 7, 2026

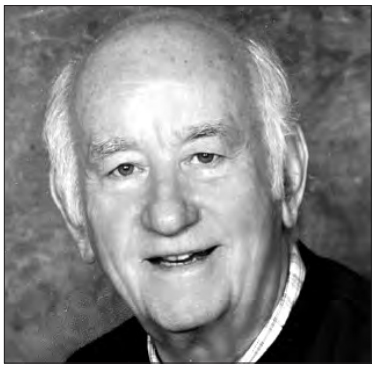
It is with profound sadness the family of Ellen Jane announce her passing in the early morning of September 7, 2026, after a five-year battle with cancer and dermatomyositis, she began her journey to the other side. She was born on October 10, 1946 to the late Velma and Tom Bird. Ellen Jane leaves behind her husband and partner Gerald Tullis, her children Tina (Dan) and Todd, as well as four wonderful grandchildren Maxwell, Norah, Asha and Brenin. She will be missed by her sister Virginia (Bryan Dawn) and brother Tom (Regina Gill), as well as a following of amazing friends. Her bridge girls will miss her.

Ellen Jane spent most of her career as a travel consultant and wonderful mother. She travelled the world and arranged memorable tours for her clients and friends. As a business-woman in Perth, she was an active member in the Chamber of Commerce and was elected the first female president in the club's history.

All are invited to join for Ellen Jane's Celebration of Life and Sharing of Memories at the Blair & Son Funeral Home Reception Centre, 15 Gore St. W. Perth, on Friday, September 18, 2026 from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Family tributes will be shared at 4:00 p.m. Private family services and interment will take place at the Rideau Ferry Cemetery.

In memoriam donations may be made to Providence Care (AB Homestead House) or the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital Foundation.

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ELSE
Michael (Mike)

JULY 2, 1938 – SEPT. 5, 2026

Mike passed away peacefully at the Brockville General Hospital with his loving wife and daughter by his side. Born in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, England and emigrated to Canada in 1976, Mike is survived by his loving wife, Irene Casselman, his daughter Sharyn, and son Simon. He will be lovingly remembered by his precious granddaughter, Kaleigh (Alec), and by his brother John, his niece Anita (Andy) and great niece, Emily. He will be missed terribly.

Mike was an electrical engineer and an instructor in the technical department at Heritage College (CEGEP, Hull). He enjoyed his singing in retirement and was an active member of The Men of The Tay and St. James Anglican Church Choir in Perth. Mike volunteered with many organizations including The Guatemala Stove Project, St. James Anglican Church, drove for Community Home Support and was a member of Probus.

The family wishes to thank the Perth and Smiths Falls Emergency Department and the Brockville General Hospital-Stroke Unit along with Palliative Care for their compassionate care.

Friends are invited to join the family for Mike's memorial service at St. James the Apostle Anglican Church 12 Harvey St. Perth, on Thursday, September 17th, 2026 at 11:00am. In Mike's honour and in lieu of flowers memorial contributions can be made to Carebridge Community Support – Perth Affordable Housing Campaign or The Alzheimer's Society of Lanark, Leeds & Grenville. Arrangements are in the care of Blair & Son Funeral Home, Perth.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com

DEAKIN
Valerie

MAY 9, 1931 – SEPT. 3, 2026

Valerie Deakin passed away peacefully, surrounded by family, on Thursday September 3, 2026 in Kingston. She was predeceased by her husband of 74 years Bill and leaves her children Janice (Sue), Ian (Mirella) and her grandchildren, Ellie (Thibault), Lani (Joel) and Jake.

Originally from Shifnal, England, mom was born in 1931 and emigrated, with dad, to Smiths Falls in 1953. What was to be a short stay turned into something much longer. Together they built a meaningful and fulfilling life, there.

Mom was first and foremost a caring and gracious human being. A passionate educator, Valerie is remembered as a relentless advocate for access to education for children with disabilities and as a trailblazer for women in positions of school leadership. Her own professional journey began in 1966 when she started volunteering at a newly formed pre-school for children with developmental delays. Two years later, when that program evolved into a day school (in the basement of Perth's Farrel Hall), mom was hired as one of three founding teachers.

In 1970 the school shifted to the former New Aberdeen School site in Smiths Falls and Valerie was appointed Principal, the first and only female Principal in the Lanark County School Board for over 10 years. Like many other women of her generation, mom capably managed her professional and familial responsibilities. In addition, Valerie attended night and summer school for decades (continuously) to acquire the knowledge and skills, to stay current (improve her practice). She earned Specialist Certificates in Special Education, Teaching the Retarded, and Speech and Language, her Ontario Teachers Certificate and a Bachelor of Art Degree from Carleton University before she retired in 1989.

In 1977 mom was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee



Medal for contribution to the lives of developmental children through education and for her work with the Special Olympics. Mom served on the Executive Council of the Ontario Association of Developmental Education (OADE) as President and Member at Large.

In 1990 she was appointed to the Ontario Trillium Foundation where she adjudicated grant applications from the not-for-profit sector for improvements throughout the Quinte, Kingston and Rideau catchment areas.

In 1993, Deakin House was built and named in honour of Valerie Deakin in Perth by Tayside Community Options. In 2002 mom was awarded the Luch McCormick Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Advancement of the Developmentally Challenged by OADE and a life-time membership in the organization.

Good health and a lengthy retirement gave mom and dad the opportunity to explore the world and spend their winters in Florida where they joined new communities of friends.

A reception was held to celebrate Valerie's life at Blair and Son Funeral Home, 112 Beckwith Street North, Smiths Falls, on Friday, September 11 from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. followed by interment at St Bede's cemetery. In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to SE Foundation (St. Elizabeth) from whom Valerie received companionate care.

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Thank You



Reverend

DRAFFIN
Samuel Warnock

OCT. 17, 1933 – AUG. 9, 2026

The family of the late **Rev. Sam Draffin** would like to express our sincere thanks to all who sent cards, brought food, made phone calls, and gave donations in Sam's memory.

Thank you to the pallbearers, musicians, and audio-visual technicians.

Special thanks to Pastor Eric Green for the meaningful service and to Stephen Draffin and Pastor Bruce North for their touching eulogies.

Thank you to Blair and Son and their staff who went out of their way to make us comfortable.

Thank you to all those who visited Sam in hospital. Your acts of kindness and thoughtful words were very much appreciated.

Sigrid
Stephen and Brenda

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Smiths Falls Record Journal

From a candy store to eye-candy



Garden of the Month

BY MARINA QUATTROCCHI

In the 1940's Sharon Clow's home at 36 Russell Street East was a grocery store where children could buy candy. Now her front yard has been transformed into eye candy for both children and adults. When Sharon purchased the home in 2004, it had been abandoned for many years and she said, "It was just disgusting." But after years of care and attention Sharon now says, "I love this little house."

She found an old, weathered sign in the garage with the name of the original grocery store, M. Leach Grocery. It's now on the top of the front porch and she would eventually like to have it restored. She said, "I've had a lot of seniors drop by and say when I was a kid I used to buy candy and groceries from this store."

The front yard which is now a stunning display of flowers was just grass when she moved in. She eventually built it up with bags and bags of compost and soil. In the early years she planted the entire front yard with cosmos plants and was told it looked like an English country garden.

Every year she added different plants until her garden was so well established that everything came up on its own. Her sunflowers which are over ten feet tall and growing past the porch roof, came up from last year's seeds. They've become magnets for goldfinches who hang upside down munching away at the seeds. Some years she's had sunflowers that are as big as dinner plates.

Her garden has become so prolific Sharon is constantly giving plants away, but the more she gives away, the more she seems to have. The birds and squirrels may be dropping off presents because she constantly has new plants and has no idea where they came from.

Sharon's bright pink Rose of Sharon bush is the central feature in her garden. It's also growing past the porch roof and is so healthy she cuts it back about two feet every year. She remembers when she purchased it in just a one-gallon bucket. Sharon said that once her garden was established it wasn't a lot of work.

She adds geraniums and marigolds every spring, but everything else is either a perennial or has self-seeded. She also has a beautiful private garden in her back yard, a secret spot tucked away where she enjoys reading. Gardening comes naturally to Sharon since both her grandparents were avid gardeners. When asked it she had any gardening tips she said, "People get afraid of doing something wrong. I just go in with a shovel and start pulling up plants. If you don't like something just dig it out."

There is a constant stream of people admiring Sharon's garden from the sidewalk. When one young man passed by and called her "Honey," she said that's a common occurrence. One time a women came to her garden, handed her a beautiful flower and said, "There love, you deserve that."

As winner of the Smiths Falls Horticultural Society Garden of the Month for September, Sharon has won a free membership to the horticultural society.

Town working toward 30% tree canopy status

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Although presently shy of the goal of 30 percent overall tree canopy coverage across town established in the 2021 Tree Canopy and Vegetation Preservation and Enhancement Policy, overall canopy coverage in Smiths Falls remains practically unchanged over the past few years, according to a staff report prepared for the August 31 special committee of the whole meeting by Richard Grant, Planner I for the Town.

Grant's report states that an assessment conducted in 2024 shows that "the change in overall tree canopy coverage in Smiths Falls between 2019 (the time of the first assessment) and 2024 was modest," decreasing by 0.52 percent, from 23.77 percent to 23.25 percent over that period.

That figure represents approximately 13 acres of net canopy loss over the five-year period (from 600.52 acres in 2019 to 587.50 acres in 2024).

"The Town-wide reduction of 0.52 percent provides an overall measure of canopy change. However, it does not capture how that change occurred across the community," said Grant, who pointed out that mapping identifies areas "where canopy loss was more concentrated, including areas experiencing recent development and redevelopment."

The town's Southwest Residential Area experienced the largest decrease, from 22.98 percent in 2019 to 17.04 percent in 2024, "largely due to residential development, including the Bellamy Farm and Maple Ridge subdivisions," states Grant.

The Southeast Residential Area decreased from 25.56 percent to 23.84 percent, "primarily reflecting canopy removal associated with the development of the Broadview Nursing Home (on Pearl Street)," while the Lombard Street Corridor decreased from 21.88 percent to 20.81 percent, "reflecting new commercial development and associated site clearing and parking areas."

The Downtown Core tree canopy decreased from 10.61 percent to 9.48 percent over the five-year span.

However, Grant points out that "during the assessment period, streetscape renewal resulted in the removal of mature trees and the planting of replacement trees," in that area of town, and since newly planted trees require time to establish and develop larger crowns, "their canopy contribution is not yet fully reflected in the 2024 assessment."

Not surprisingly, the Gallipeau Centre (former Rideau Regional Centre site) and nearby Lorne Street Development Area lands continue to have the town's highest canopy coverage, growing from 37.29 percent to 38.87 percent from 2019 to 2024, an increase that Grant attributes to "limited development activity and the continued growth of established trees."

The Northern Mixed-Use Area of town also increased from 9.58 percent to 10.77 percent, while Uptown East and Uptown West "remained relatively stable," said Grant.

His staff report concludes that the 2024 assessment results "suggest that a five-year assessment period is a relatively short timeframe for evaluating meaningful changes in the town's overall tree canopy coverage," and that while that assessment identifies a decline in canopy cover, "it should not be interpreted as a measure of the success or failure of tree-planting or replacement activities."







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Candidate raises concerns over Strong Mayor Powers – Page 3

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Smiths Falls Record
Journal



Electing Morris could cost town a million dollars

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Quinn seeks return to Smiths Falls council
PAGE 2

It was once fun to rake up and burn the leaves, but within the town limits of Smiths Falls this has been illegal for many years.

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Suspicious Lombard Street fire under investigation by OPP

A fire that destroyed three vehicles at a storage facility on Lombard Street in Smiths Falls is being investigated as suspicious.

Emergency crews were called to the property at 158 Lombard St., behind a storage facility connected to Big Rideau Tackle, at about 8:27 p.m. Monday, Sept. 21.

Smiths Falls firefighters were first on scene and were later joined by five trucks and 16 firefighters from Rideau Lakes. The blaze was brought under control by 10:26 p.m.

Rideau Lakes Fire Chief Gene Richardson said the fire destroyed a tow-behind travel trailer, a motorhome and a boat. No injuries were reported.

Ontario Provincial Police Const. Joey Mason said the fire is being treated as suspicious. The Office of the Fire Marshal and the OPP's Forensic Identification Services are assisting with the investigation.

The property sits near the boundary between Smiths Falls and Rideau Lakes, resulting in emergency crews from both municipalities responding. Richardson thanked Smiths Falls emergency personnel for their assistance.

Rideau Lakes man is charged with robbery

A 41-year-old Rideau Lakes man is facing several charges following a dispute at a residence in the township.

Leeds County Ontario Provincial Police said the investigation resulted in the man being charged with robbery with violence, assault causing bodily harm by choking, suffocating or strangling, theft under $5,000 and driving while under suspension.

Police said the victim suffered minor injuries.

The identity of the accused is not being released in order to protect the identity of the victim.

The accused remains in custody and is scheduled to appear for a bail hearing before the Ontario Court of Justice in Brockville on Friday, Sept. 25.

The charges have not been proven in court.

Foxton visits Falls Food Hub as new Smiths Falls location opens

Former Lanark County Liberal candidate Michelle Foxton joined the grand opening of the Falls Food Hub's new location at 41 Chambers St. in Smiths Falls this month, saying the visit gave her a better understanding of the organization's work and the growing need for food support.

According to information shared during the opening, about one in four households across Leeds, Grenville and Lanark experiences food insecurity, with more than one-quarter of Smiths Falls households affected.

The Falls Food Hub typically serves more than 80 people on an average Monday. With the new location now open Monday through Friday, the space is also becoming a place where residents can stop for coffee, conversation and social connection.

"Food insecurity is a serious challenge in our communities, but places like this remind us of what can happen when people come together to look after one another," Foxton said.



COUN. Dawn Quinn is a community volunteer and a town councillor.

With focus on services, infrastructure

Quinn seeks return to Smiths Falls council

Incumbent Smiths Falls Coun. Dawn Quinn is seeking another term at the council table, campaigning on health care, infrastructure, tourism and what she describes as responsible municipal spending.

Quinn is one of 15 candidates seeking six council seats in the Oct. 26 municipal election. The Town of Smiths Falls currently lists her as a member of council.

Quinn says she would bring to another term her experience from years of living and working in Smiths Falls, along with involvement in community organizations and initiatives.

Listening to residents and understanding their concerns would remain an important part of her approach, she says.

Among Quinn's priorities is physician recruitment to help improve access to health-care services in the community.

She is also calling for an engineering review of the Chambers Street subway to assess its condition, identify potential safety concerns and determine what repairs may be required.

Flooding is another issue Quinn wants council to address. She says the municipality should investigate ways to reduce flooding affecting residential basements and yards while continuing improvements to local infrastructure.

Quinn also wants the Town to consider how downtown parking spaces affected by redevelopment can be replaced.

Tourism and community events form another part of her platform. She supports activities including Bike Night, music festivals, RibFest, public art displays and Christmas light displays as ways of attracting visitors and promoting Smiths Falls.

Quinn also wants council to examine the future needs of the Smiths Falls Fire Department, including whether its facilities require expansion or replacement.

On municipal finances, Quinn says tax dollars should be directed toward community needs rather than wants. Other proposals include installing additional public waste containers and benches.

Quinn points to her involvement with organizations and initiatives including the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario, Smiles for Lonely Seniors, the REAL Deal Store, Cataraqui Trail and the Sports Complex. She says Smiles for Lonely Seniors distributed 500 gifts to seniors in 2025.

Potential damages from CAO

Electing Nathaniel Morris could cost the Town a million dollars

BY DAVID LEONARDO

An oft-repeated mayoralty campaign promise of candidate Nathaniel Morris in the Smiths Falls election is to fire CAO Malcolm Morris which if pronounced as an unjust dismissal by a court could cost the Town up to $500,000 based on previous Ontario municipal cases. Possibly added to this is malicious prosecution which in the extreme would reach an additional $550,000 as it has in a previous Ontario case. Both penalties applied to the Town could reach a million dollar-plus bill.

Coincidentally, while the two men share the same family name they are unrelated.

Win, or lose, the Town will be spending an unknown amount of money for legal fees as well, surpassing any damage, or settlement if there is one.

On Sept. 14, candidate Morris publicly released a report alleging Smiths Falls mishandled environmental test results from a municipal site within a Drinking Water Intake Protection Zone. The report says a 2024 soil test showing lead and petroleum hydrocarbon contamination was treated as solicitor-client privileged and was not promptly shared with municipal staff, the province, the health unit or the public. It does not allege contaminated drinking water reached residents. The candidate says the handling of the information represents a serious accountability failure

CAO Morris has strongly rejected the allegations.

If elected, using Strong Mayor Powers, candidate Morris says he will arbitrarily fire the chief administrative officer without interference from council as he is allowed to do so.

He says, "Ontario's Strong Mayor Powers include authority over the CAO position. I have been clear that replacing the CAO is the one circumstance in which I intend to use those powers. In every other circumstance, I believe council should govern through consensus.

By putting this commitment before voters now, I am giving them a direct say on the change in leadership I am proposing. If elected, I will consider that a clear democratic mandate to replace the CAO."

How much money

A successful unjust dismissal award amount for CAO Morris will depend on his employment agreement.

So, for a CAO earning an annual $176,000, the court award could be roughly $350,000-plus benefits as a realistic upper-end ordinary wrongful-dismissal exposure if 24 months applied. A strong contractual entitlement, particularly a 30- or 36-month clause, could take the compensation component above $500,000. If serious bad-faith, defamation, human-rights or other independently compensable conduct were proven, total exposure could rise substantially beyond that.

There can also be aggravated or moral damages where the manner of dismissal causes compensable harm because the employer acted dishonestly, unfairly or in bad faith, and punitive damages. In the extreme, litigation involving a municipal official and malicious prosecution, punitive damages have reached as high as $550,000 which would put the bill well over a million dollars.

Aside from the legal expenses there will be a recruiting cost to find a new CAO who will need time to learn about Smiths Falls. One knowledgeable executive recruiter says the salary demands will be higher from applicants for a town which publicly fires their staff.

Other staff members jobs are safe.

Candidate Morris says "No, I will not dismiss any other Town Hall staff members. A mayor does not have general authority to dismiss municipal employees. My commitment is specifically to replace the CAO," although the CAO as a municipal employee will be fired with Strong Mayor Powers if candidate Morris is elected.



Candidate Nat Morris



CAO Malcolm Morris

Robinson sees a problem

Candidate raises concerns over Strong Mayor Powers

Smiths Falls Coun. Stephen Robinson is raising concerns about how Ontario's strong mayor powers could be used following the Oct. 26 municipal election, pointing specifically to mayoral candidate Nate Morris's stated intention to replace senior staff at town hall.

Robinson, an incumbent seeking re-election to council, said he is concerned about the possibility of the powers being used to dismiss Chief Administrative Officer Malcolm Morris and other senior employees.

"I am deeply concerned by the suggestion that those powers could be used to remove the current CAO as well as other administrative staff," Robinson said. "To me, that crosses an important line."

In this edition of the Journal, candidate Morris repeats a pledge to remove the CAO. (See separate story)

Under Ontario's strong mayor legislation, the head of council in a designated municipality has powers normally exercised by council relating to the appointment of a CAO. The legislation also gives mayors authority over the municipality's organizational structure and the hiring or dismissal of certain division heads, although several statutory positions are excluded. Smiths Falls is among the municipalities designated for strong mayor powers.

Robinson said the issue goes beyond any individual employee and raises broader questions about how municipal decisions should be made.

"Democracy is not about giving one elected person more and more authority while diminishing the role of everyone else who was elected by the people," he said.

Robinson said he favours a system in which councillors debate issues and make decisions collectively.

"Strong leadership should mean bringing council together, not finding ways to go around it," he said.



Coun. Stephen Robinson

Rideau Lakes candidate defends township council – Page 6

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

Education



LEFT TO RIGHT: Ron Ferguson, UCDSB Chief Executive Officer; Grant Emmell, 2026-27 Student Trustee; Ava Andress, 2026-27 Student Trustee; Jamie Schoular, Chair of the Board.

UCDSB welcomes new student trustees for 2026-27 school year

Two students have officially joined the Upper Canada District School Board's Board of Trustees for the 2026-27 school year.

At the board's Sept. 9 meeting, Ava Andress of Thousand Islands Secondary School and Grant Emmell of South Grenville District High School were formally sworn in as student trustees.

Both students signed their declarations and made their public oaths of allegiance before taking their seats alongside trustees at the board table.

Andress and Emmell were selected by members of the UCDSB Student Senate in February 2026.

During their terms, the pair will participate in regular Board of Trustees meetings and provide reports on their activities and the issues being discussed by students across the school board.

They will also serve as co-chairs of the UCDSB Student Senate, giving them an opportunity to help bring student perspectives directly to the board's decision-making process.

Student trustees serve as a link between students and the elected Board of Trustees, providing input on matters affecting schools and helping ensure student voices are represented during board discussions.

Through their roles with both the board and Student Senate, Andress and Emmell will have the opportunity to raise issues identified by students from schools throughout the UCDSB and report back on board initiatives and decisions.

Their Sept. 9 swearing-in marked the formal beginning of their student trustee duties for the 2026-27 school year.

County female First Responders camp returns on Friday, Oct. 16

Lanark County will hold the second annual Female First Responders Camp on Friday, October 16 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., and on Saturday, October 17, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Perth Fire Services, 1881 Rogers Road, Perth. The camp is a two-day immersive experience designed to empower young women with real-life emergency skills, mentorship, and career exploration. All self-identifying females ages 15 to 21 who reside in Lanark County are eligible to participate.

This program features hands-on training sessions led by experts from local emergency services, including Lanark County Fire Departments, Lanark County Paramedic Service, Smiths Falls Police Services, Lanark County Ontario Provincial Police, and the Ministry of Natural Resources. Participants learn to use personal protective equipment, perform basic first aid and CPR, manage emergency scenes, and practice critical techniques like auto extraction and search and rescue operations.

In addition to skill development, the camp offers a unique opportunity to explore rewarding careers in emergency services, fostering collaboration between enthusiastic participants and dedicated professionals.

TV series offers reminder of horror of Oct. 7 attack on Israel

Movie director Quentin Tarantino has said his favourite scene in all of the films he has made was the opening of Inglourious Basterds where the incomparably sinister Nazi "Jew Hunter" Hans Landa, played by Christoph Waltz, orders the slaughter of a Jewish family hiding under the floorboards of a farmhouse in the French countryside.

At the end of the scene, one of the members of the family, Shoshana Dreyfus, played by French actress Mélanie Laurent, escapes by running through a field with Landa yelling after her "au revoir, Shoshana."

Indeed, Landa does see Shoshana again, three years later, in perhaps the second most terrifying scene in the 2009 film, when they share a tense bouchée of apple strudel – "don't forget the cream" – in a Paris bistro while Landa queries Shoshana, then living under a new identify, about the movie theatre she owns.

The movie is too well known to require a spoiler alert, so we can say it contains perhaps the ultimate fantasized Nazi revenge scene when Shoshana burns down her cinema, incinerating Adolph Hitler and his entire high command.

We mention this because 17 years and many roles later, Laurent, whose family on her mother's side are Polish Jews who escaped the Holocaust, finds herself in what can only be viewed as a wildly opposite role to her brave Nazi killer.

Those who have watched the Netflix series Fauda know it deals with controversial material, being set in Israel and surrounding hostile territories, and featuring agents of an Israeli anti-terrorist unit.

For whatever reason, though, Fauda is a hit in Arab countries where Netflix is available, from Lebanon to Jordan to the United Arab Emirates.

The star and co-creator of Fauda – Hebrew for "chaos" – is Lior Raz, a former Israeli Defence Force commando and personal bodyguard for Arnold Schwarzenegger. His bio says when he was 19 his girlfriend was killed in a terrorist knife attack.

It was such a burst of cross-border conflict in Israel that brought Laurent to the Fauda series. She had been visiting Tel Aviv during an outbreak and ended up staying with Raz's family for safety. They had known each other since they both starred in Canadian screenwriter Paul Warnick's action picture 6 Underground, as well as Operation Finale about the hunt for Nazi war criminal Adolph Eichmann.

During that visit, Laurent and Raz talked about finding a role for her in the fifth season of Fauda.

That recently released season takes place three years after the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attacks on Israeli soil, meaning now. The anti-terrorist team reunites to track down a Hamas commander who slaughtered the family of one of its members. They are able to identify him because the Hamas murderers filmed and posted videos of many of the atrocities they committed.

3-minutes with
Peter Black
Columnist



The hunt takes the team to Marseille, France, where the Hamas commander now does humanitarian work at a Muslim community centre – and recruits European-looking terrorist prospects. Laurent plays the commander's wife, a blindingly blonde woman who has no clue about her sweetheart's deeds during the attack on Israel.

When the Israeli team executes the commander/husband, Laurent's character signs up for the Palestinian cause to seek revenge, and is sent to a Hamas training camp where a huge suicide attack is being planned.

We'll stop there in revealing the plot. However, what is remarkable about the series, apart from Laurent's terrorist makeover, is that it devotes two full episodes to depicting the Oct. 7 attack in gut-wrenching, heart-breaking detail.

The episodes are so disturbing the series producers issued an advisory inviting viewers concerned about the content to skip the two chapters and continue with the next one which supposedly picks up the story seamlessly.

That may be so, but those two episodes should be required viewing for those who may have forgotten the scale and brutality of the Hamas attacks on innocent civilians.

A highly coordinated wave of Hamas militants, backed by a barrage of rocket fire, breached the fortified Gaza border with Israel and killed 800 civilians, including 36 children, in the name of wiping out Jews from "the river to the sea." Some 360 Israeli soldiers died trying to defend the civilians.

At least five documentaries have been made about the Oct. 7 attacks, but Fauda is likely the first mainstream production to take a serious look at what happened, albeit within the context of an on-going, and very popular action series.

Given the monstrosity of the well-documented Hamas-inflicted horror, who would have thought the upshot of the massacre of hundreds of Jews would be the rise of antisemitism?

As the third anniversary of the Oct. 7 slaughter nears, the targeting of Jews, fueled by condemnation, some justifiable, of Israel's retaliatory war on Hamas, is even finding its way to the peaceful Bellevilles of the world.

County approves $65,000 for Lanark Lodge Café reno

Lanark Lodge residents, families and visitors will soon have a new place to gather, with Lanark County Council approving up to $65,000 from the home's Resident Donation Account to transform the existing Tuck Shop into a café.

Director of Long-Term Care Shawna Stone said the main-floor Tuck Shop has traditionally operated as a volunteer-run convenience service one day a week.

"This is an opportunity to revitalize the space into a more welcoming café that supports local connection, provides access to beverages and light meal options, and enhances the overall experience for residents, families, visitors, staff and allied health partners," Stone said.

The project responds to resident and family satisfaction surveys that have repeatedly identified interest in better café-style services and additional gathering space.

Following an expression of interest issued in June, the contract was awarded to Jazzy's, a Perth café owned and operated by Kelsey Dold.

Jazzy's will operate seven days a week, offering beverages, baked goods, soups, sandwiches, snacks and grab-and-go meals prepared off-site. The project has received Public Health approval.

Large-print menus, gift cards, loyalty programs, appreciation days and support for family gatherings are also planned.

Mayoralty candidate Paula Banks

Rideau Lakes candidate defends township council

Rideau Lakes mayoralty candidate Paula Banks is pushing back against a characterization of the current township council as dysfunctional, arguing that frequent disagreements and close votes should not overshadow what council has accomplished during the term.

Banks, currently a Ward 1 councillor, is one of five certified candidates seeking the mayor's chair in the Oct. 26 municipal election. She is running against John Fenik, Kimberly Brown, Ronald Young and Steve Weir.

A Smiths Falls-based reporter recently characterized the council term as dysfunctional, a description Banks strongly disputes.

"We have disagreed, and many decisions have come down to 5 to 4 recorded votes, but taxpayers should look beyond the vote count and ask what this council and our staff actually accomplished," Banks said.

Township records confirm council has had numerous closely divided recorded votes during the term, including 5-4 decisions.

Banks said affordability and rising property taxes have been central concerns behind many councillor-led initiatives. She said councillors have pushed for savings, sought more detailed financial information before approving expenditures and placed greater emphasis on maintaining existing municipal assets.

She points to the township's asset management planning as one example.

Banks said the municipality was facing an annual infrastructure funding shortfall of about $1.6 million when she joined council and that an updated plan has since reduced the identified annual gap.

The township's 2025 Asset Management Plan calculates an annual capital infrastructure deficit of approximately $816,000 and recommends a five-year period to reach its proposed service and investment levels. The plan values the township's asset portfolio at approximately $128 million.

"My background in inventory management and procurement taught me that if you do not plan for what you own, the bill eventually catches up with you," Banks said.

Consultants cost

She also argues council has become more willing to question whether outside consultants are necessary. Banks said consulting costs were removed from work on the Community Risk Assessment and Strategic Plan, while Delta village visioning work is being undertaken with township staff, the Community Enhancement Committee and volunteers.

Banks cited the Elgin cistern project as another example of council challenging spending proposals. She said an initial price was approximately $121,000 before council sent the work back for additional bids, with the eventual contract coming in at about $61,000.

She also points to two major capital projects completed during the term — Fire Station No. 2 in Lombardy and the Portland Community Hall and Library.

The new Lombardy fire station was completed in fall 2024, while the Portland Community Hall and Library officially opened in May 2025.

Banks said council has also expanded public participation in budgeting and planning, created a Recreation and Volunteer Committee, increased volunteer recognition and made information about the proposed ALTO high-speed rail project available to residents.

"I respectfully challenge any local media to look beyond the 5 to 4 vote counts and tell taxpayers the whole story," Banks said.



Canadidate Paula Banks

She encouraged residents to examine council motions and recorded votes themselves before reaching conclusions about the term.

"Look at what the motions were trying to accomplish, what they saved, what they changed and what they did for residents," Banks said. "I encourage taxpayers to read the motions, look at the recorded votes and judge this council by the public record, not the clickbait."

Second person charged with murder in Augusta Township

A 50-year-old Augusta Township man has been charged with second-degree murder in connection with the death of a 79-year-old woman found at a County Road 26 residence in July.

Ontario Provincial Police have identified the victim as Donna Lowry of Augusta Township.

Grenville County OPP officers were called to the residence shortly before 3:30 p.m. on July 8, where Lowry was found dead. Police subsequently determined her death was a homicide.

David Collison, 50, of Augusta Township, was arrested Sept. 22 and charged with second-degree murder, indignity to a dead body, assault with a weapon, forcible confinement, assault causing bodily harm and possession of a firearm or ammunition contrary to a prohibition order.

Police said Collison remained in custody and was scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Brockville on Sept. 23.

The arrest marks the second person charged in connection with the investigation. On Sept. 15, police charged another person with indignity to a dead body. OPP did not identify that accused in the information released.

The Grenville County OPP Crime Unit is continuing the investigation under the direction of the OPP Criminal Investigation Branch, working with the Office of the Chief Coroner and Ontario Forensic Pathology Service.

OPP canine officers, the Emergency Response Team, Forensic Identification Services and East Region Community Street Crime Unit have also assisted.

"We are grateful that we can provide answers to Donna's family and hold people accountable for their involvement in her death," Det. Insp. Jocelyn Sauve of the OPP Criminal Investigation Branch said.

Sauve credited the investigative team's "dedication and persistence" and thanked the public and media for their patience and support.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Grenville County OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Anonymous tips can be provided through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

The charges have not been proven in court.

Another provincial program targets family doctor shortage

The Ontario government has opened applications for a program aimed at encouraging more medical students to become family doctors and remain in the province after completing their training.

Beginning this fall, the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant for Medical Education will provide funding to eligible medical residents who agree to practise comprehensive primary care as a family doctor in Ontario for at least five years after completing their residency.

The grant retroactively covers eligible costs from undergraduate medical school, including tuition, compulsory fees, books, supplies, equipment and other direct educational expenses. The province says the program is intended to reduce financial barriers for future family physicians while increasing access to primary care.

Applicants must currently be in the first year of a postgraduate family medicine residency program at an Ontario medical school. Eligible schools include McMaster University, NOSM University, Queen's University, Toronto Metropolitan University, the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto and Western University.

Students must also be Canadian citizens, permanent residents or protected persons and meet Ontario residency requirements. They must have completed their undergraduate medical education at an Ontario medical school.

Unlike the broader Ontario Learn and Stay Grant, which requires many recipients to work in the region where they studied, medical education recipients can fulfil their five-year service commitment by practising family medicine anywhere in Ontario.

The province has said its expanded medical grant program will cover four cohorts of medical students and help strengthen Ontario's primary-care workforce. Ontario has committed $159.6 million over three years beginning in 2026-27 toward the expansion.

Applications

Applications are administered through the Ontario Student Assistance Program.

Recipients who fail to complete the required service commitment could have their grant converted into a repayable loan.



SMITHS FALLS site emergency entrance is known to many.

Perth and Smiths Falls hospital reports busy year as MRI access increases visits

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN

The Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital (PSFDH) says expanded MRI services, infrastructure improvements and additional provincial funding helped strengthen local health care during a year that also brought significant pressure on hospital capacity.

In its newly released 2025-26 annual report, the two-site hospital says it provided services to a population of more than 75,000 people while recording 38,442 emergency department visits, 4,058 admissions and 4,067 discharges. The hospital also delivered 220 babies during the year.

Diagnostic imaging remained one of the hospital's busiest areas. PSFDH reported performing 3,876 MRI exams, 9,562 CT scans, 10,522 ultrasounds and more than 37,000 X-rays during the year.

MRI capacity has also been expanded. The hospital introduced extended evening hours after demand for the service increased. PSFDH says it is now capable of adding approximately 70 to 85 MRI examinations each week, on top of a program that had been performing about 3,100 examinations annually before the additional hours were introduced.

Smiths Falls site

The MRI, located at the Smiths Falls site, began operating in late 2023. The hospital foundation says more than 4,000 patients have since received scans locally, reducing the need for some residents to travel to larger centres for diagnostic testing.

Infrastructure work has also continued at the Smiths Falls hospital. Provincial Hospital Infrastructure Renewal Fund money supported installation of a new chilled-water system, including a new chiller and cooling tower. The hospital also replaced its fire alarm system and carried out sprinkler-system improvements at both the Perth and Smiths Falls sites.

Finances remain a major issue. PSFDH reported approximately $104 million in revenue and $112 million in expenses for 2025-26. About 90 per cent of revenue came from the Ministry of Health. The hospital said additional government funding helped reduce its projected deficit from $21.6 million to $8 million.

Salaries and benefits accounted for 59 per cent of hospital spending, while medical staff remuneration represented another 18 per cent. Supplies, medical equipment, drugs and capital costs made up much of the balance.

The report comes during a period of continuing pressure on hospital services. In June, PSFDH warned that both sites were experiencing critical inpatient capacity pressures because of a shortage of available beds. Emergency departments remained open, but hospital officials cautioned that people with less urgent conditions could face longer waits while the sickest patients were treated first.

PSFDH currently employs 346 full-time and 334 part-time staff, works with 233 physicians and is supported by 145 volunteers, according to the annual report.

New Lanark County plan focuses on affordable Housing and Homelessness

Lanark County has adopted a new long-term Housing and Homelessness Plan aimed at addressing rising housing costs, limited supply and increasing homelessness across the county.

County council adopted the 2026-2035 Housing and Homelessness Plan in principle and authorized staff to submit it to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval.

Housing Services Manager Kaitlyn Murray said the Housing Services Act requires service managers to identify local housing needs, establish community priorities and develop strategies to improve housing affordability and address homelessness. Plans are reviewed on a five-year cycle.

OrgCode Consulting was awarded the contract to update the plan in February. The process included data analysis, a community survey, public forums, a stakeholder forum, interviews and site visits.

"Residents and stakeholders consistently identified a lack of affordable housing, long wait times for Rent-Geared-to-Income housing, increasing housing costs, concerns for seniors and fixed-income households, limited housing options with support needs, increasing visibility of homelessness and challenges accessing services in a rural county," Murray said.

The plan identifies four major pressures facing Lanark County: housing costs rising faster than incomes, a housing supply that does not match current and projected need, changing demand caused by population growth and aging, and increasing homelessness.

The report also points to several existing strengths, including strong community partnerships, the Situation Table, the county's coordinated By-Name List for homelessness, the Lanark Integrated Frontline Team outreach program, Bridge House transitional housing and the HART Hub.

Other supports include adult supportive housing, winter response planning, youth housing programs and continued county investment in affordable housing and rent supports.

The plan establishes five strategic priorities for the next decade. They include protecting and making better use of existing housing, strengthening system leadership and planning, expanding housing supply through partnerships, addressing the needs of seniors and fixed-income households, and improving coordinated responses for people with complex needs.

The plan will guide Lanark County's housing and homelessness policies through 2035, subject to provincial approval.



FIRE departments in Lanark County will be recognizing Fire Prevention Week from Oct. 4 to 10 with safety messages for their citizens.

Fire Pevention Week Oct. 4 -10

County residents urged to charge into fire safety

Lanark County residents are being encouraged to review their home fire-safety habits as Fire Prevention Week is observed across Canada from Oct. 4 to 10.

This year's theme, "Charge Into Fire Safety: Safe Charging Is a Superpower," focuses on preventing fires involving lithium-ion batteries, which are now common in cellphones, laptops, power tools, toys, e-bikes and scooters.

Fire-safety officials recommend using chargers and cords supplied or approved by manufacturers, charging devices on hard surfaces and unplugging them once fully charged. Residents should also stop using batteries that are damaged, swollen or overheating.

The message is particularly relevant across Lanark County, where municipal fire departments provide fire protection to urban and rural communities.

Lanark County lists fire services operating in Beckwith, Carleton Place, Drummond/North Elmsley, Lanark Highlands, Mississippi Mills, Montague, Perth and Tay Valley. Smiths Falls Fire Department also provides communications services for Lanark County fire departments under an agreement with the county.

The county stresses that prevention and preparation are important because many fatal residential fires occur at night, leaving occupants little time to escape. Residents are encouraged to develop and practise a home escape plan, identify two exits from each room and select an outdoor meeting place.

Fire Prevention Week also provides an opportunity to test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and make sure family members know what to do during an emergency.

The federal proclamation establishing this year's Fire Prevention Week also designates Saturday, Oct. 10, as Fire Service Recognition Day, recognizing professional, volunteer and industrial firefighters across Canada.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

Lewis Koluk campaigns on infrastructure, healthcare and business growth in Smiths Falls

Lewis Koluk is seeking one of six council seats in the Oct. 26 Smiths Falls municipal election, saying his campaign will focus on infrastructure, healthcare, entrepreneurship and a municipal government that can respond quickly to changing community needs.

Koluk is one of 15 candidates competing for the six council positions.

"I love Smiths Falls," Koluk said. "Working with various committees and volunteer organizations has shown me the very best our town has to offer. These experiences have given me a deep sense of civic responsibility to Smiths Falls."

Koluk said his platform is built around achievable goals that can produce tangible results.

He identifies continued infrastructure upgrades as one of the most important responsibilities facing the next council. That includes dealing with immediate concerns such as roads and garbage collection while also planning longer-term improvements involving traffic flow, cycling and water infrastructure.

"We need to deal with the problems in front of us while also preparing for the ones farther down the road," he said.

Healthcare is another major part of Koluk's platform.

He wants Smiths Falls to work toward attracting additional medical professionals and healthcare facilities, arguing that expanded local services could reduce travel, costs and stress for residents.

Koluk said he would like Smiths Falls to become a regional leader in medical capacity, serving both local residents and people from surrounding communities.

"Building that capacity would strengthen Smiths Falls as a regional centre and make care more accessible to our community," he said.

Koluk is also calling for greater support for entrepreneurs and existing businesses.



Council candidate Lewis Koluk

He said the municipality should make it easier to start a business and eliminate unnecessary barriers that can slow investment or make it more difficult for established businesses to adapt.

"We need a town government that can respond to changing needs without getting stuck in bureaucracy," Koluk said.

His decision to run, however, is also rooted in his personal experience in the community.

Koluk said living in Smiths Falls gave him stability during difficult periods of his life and introduced him to residents and organizations working to improve the town.

He became increasingly involved in volunteer activities, including meeting people connected with REAL Deal shoreline cleanups, Rural FASD's Red Shoe Run and the Falls Food Hub.

Those experiences, he said, encouraged him to become more involved in municipal affairs.

Koluk eventually approached town hall looking for additional ways to volunteer and joined the Equity for All committee, where he has served for the past two years. He has also attended public sessions dealing with a range of municipal issues.

Through that involvement, Koluk said he has gained a clearer understanding of challenges facing Smiths Falls, including food insecurity and pressures expected to confront the community in the years ahead.

Despite those challenges, he believes the town has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to overcome difficult circumstances.

"Smiths Falls does better than many communities with a fraction of those problems," Koluk said. "Why? Because we have smart leadership and people who always come together to support one another, even against stacked odds."

He describes Smiths Falls as an "enduring town full of hope" and an underdog community accustomed to succeeding through determination and cooperation.

* * *

Erratum: This candidate profile ran previously in the Record-Journal with a misspelling of the candidate's last name. It is now corrected with this publication.

Sunday, Oct. 4.

Fall Fest is back at the SF musuem

The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum will welcome families for an afternoon of seasonal activities when its annual Fall Fest returns Sunday, Oct. 4.

The event will run from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the museum, located at 11 Old Slys Road in Smiths Falls.

Fall Fest offers a variety of family-friendly activities celebrating the arrival of autumn. Visitors can take a wagon ride, try their hand at scavenger hunts and participate in arts and crafts.

This year's festivities will also include a bouncy castle and petting zoo, according to the Town of Smiths Falls. Festive treats will be available for purchase throughout the event.

Pumpkin carving

Visitors will also have an opportunity to register for the museum's annual Community Pumpkin Carving Contest.

Individuals, families, businesses and school classes can enter the contest, with participants invited to create a carved pumpkin for the chance to win a fall-themed prize. Pumpkins will be dropped off later in October, with public voting taking place from Oct. 23 to 31.

The museum says Fall Fest pays homage to the former Smiths Falls Turkey Fair while offering residents a chance to enjoy seasonal activities on the historic museum grounds.

The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum is housed in an 1860s-era home overlooking the Rideau Canal and regularly hosts exhibits, heritage programs and special community events.

For more information about Fall Fest, residents can contact the museum at 613-283-6311 or heritagehouse@smithsfalls.ca.

Bridges repair to cost more than $6.2-mil. — Page 18

Police charge man after attempted vehicle thefts

A 21-year-old Smiths Falls man is facing charges after police responded to reports of four males allegedly attempting to get into parked vehicles on Lombard Street.

Smiths Falls Police Service said officers were called to the area on Aug. 29 after receiving a report of suspicious activity involving vehicles.

Police said officers arrived within minutes and located four people matching descriptions provided to investigators. According to police, the four fled on foot after seeing officers.

Following a brief foot pursuit, officers arrested one of the males.

The 21-year-old Smiths Falls resident has been charged with one count of theft under $5,000 and one count of failing to comply with an undertaking. He was later released from custody on conditions and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice at a later date.

Police said the investigation remains active as officers work to identify and locate the other three males believed to have been involved.

Smiths Falls Police Service is asking anyone with information about the incident, or similar incidents, to contact police at 613-283-0357.

Information can also be provided anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

The charges have not been proven in court.

Smiths Falls police make new arrest in Project STIR 2.0 drug investigation

Smiths Falls police say another arrest has been made as part of an ongoing drug-trafficking investigation that has resulted in multiple search warrants in the community.

Police said officers executed a fifth search warrant at a Smiths Falls residence on Sept. 11 as part of Project STIR 2.0, an investigation targeting suspected drug trafficking in the area.

During the search, investigators reported seizing approximately 49 grams of cocaine along with $6,305 in Canadian currency.

Kimberlynn Crystal Harper, 30, of Smiths Falls, was arrested and charged with trafficking cocaine and possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking.

Police said the latest search warrant and arrest are part of the continuing Project STIR 2.0 investigation, which has involved several enforcement actions.

The investigation has included multiple search warrants as police continue to gather evidence related to the alleged distribution of illegal drugs in Smiths Falls.

Police have not indicated whether additional arrests or charges are expected but said the investigation remains active.

Authorities have continued to encourage members of the public who may have information about suspected drug activity to contact police.

The latest seizure adds to ongoing enforcement efforts by Smiths Falls police aimed at disrupting the illegal drug trade and addressing concerns related to trafficking in the community.

None of the allegations against Harper have been proven in court. She is considered innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Further information is expected to be released if additional charges or enforcement actions result from the investigation.

Hospital's fundraising will run return to Perth, Sun. Oct. 4th

Runners and walkers will be asked to trust their instincts rather than their watches when the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital Foundation's 5K Prediction Fun Run/Walk returns to Perth on Sunday, Oct. 4.

The fundraiser will take participants on a five-kilometre route through the scenic streets of Perth, beginning and ending at Stewart Park.

Unlike a traditional road race, speed is not the deciding factor.

Before heading out on the course, participants must predict how long they believe it will take them to complete the five kilometres. Watches, cellphones, timers and other devices that could help track their pace are not permitted.

The participant whose actual finishing time comes closest to their prediction will be declared the winner.

Organizers say the unusual format makes the event accessible to both runners and walkers, allowing participants to travel at their own pace rather than competing to be the fastest person across the finish line.

An event listing indicates the run/walk is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m., with registration priced at $25. Children aged 10 and younger can participate free.

All proceeds from the event will benefit the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital and support access to healthcare in the community. The hospital foundation raises money for medical equipment and technology used at the hospital's Perth and Smiths Falls sites.

The fundraiser is being hosted by Janis Sullivan and Shannon Baillon.

The prediction run has become a recurring community fundraiser. A previous edition of the event raised $3,564 for the hospital foundation's MRI campaign.

Registration for the Oct. 4 event is available through the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital Foundation website.

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Kidney Walk set for Oct. 4 in Perth

Residents from Perth, Smiths Falls and surrounding communities will lace up their shoes Sunday, Oct. 4, for the annual Perth-Smiths Falls Kidney Walk in support of The Kidney Foundation of Canada.

The five-kilometre walk will take place at the Conlon Farm Chalet, 127 Smith Dr. in Perth. Registration begins at 10 a.m., with participants setting out at 11 a.m.

The event is part of a series of Kidney Walks taking place across Ontario and Canada, bringing together people living with kidney disease, transplant recipients, organ donors, caregivers, family members and supporters.

Funds raised help The Kidney Foundation support kidney research, education, advocacy and programs for patients and their families.

The foundation says chronic kidney disease affects about one in 10 Canadians — more than four million people — and remains an often under-recognized chronic health condition. Earlier this year, the organization launched a national strategic framework calling for greater emphasis on prevention, earlier diagnosis, treatment and equitable access to kidney care.

Organizers are encouraging participants to collect pledges ahead of the walk. Across Ontario, Kidney Walk organizers are aiming to raise more than $1 million for the fourth consecutive year.

The Perth-area walk has a history of strong community support. In 2024, about 40 participants, including members of the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital dialysis unit, raised more than $10,000 for the foundation.

Beyond fundraising, the annual event gives people touched by kidney disease an opportunity to meet others who understand the challenges associated with dialysis, transplantation and long-term kidney care.

Participants may walk in support of someone living with kidney disease, celebrate a transplant recipient, honour an organ donor or remember someone who has died.

The Kidney Foundation describes the walks as its largest nationwide community fundraising initiative, helping finance research while providing education, peer support and assistance to people affected by kidney disease.

Registration and donations for the Perth-Smiths Falls walk are available through KidneyWalk.ca

Embrun man charged with impaired operation on Pike Lake

An Embrun man is facing impaired driving and boating-related charges following an OPP marine patrol on Pike Lake.

Lanark County OPP said officers stopped a boat shortly after 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 5, after observing the vessel travelling at a high rate of speed.

Police spoke with the operator, who was arrested and taken to the OPP detachment in Perth for testing.

Mark Hercun, 51, has been charged with operation while impaired by alcohol, operation while impaired with a blood-alcohol concentration over 80 milligrams, operating a vessel without firefighting equipment and failing to have proof of competency on board a pleasure craft.

He was released from custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Perth on Oct. 19.

Police said Hercun's driver's licence was suspended for 90 days and the vessel was impounded for seven days.

The charges have not been proven in court.





ELECTION COVERAGE

Only the Smiths Falls Record-Journal has complete town election coverage. Be sure to get your copy every week from newsstands everywhere in the town.

Smiths Falls Record Journal

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Our History

Lanark County pioneers churned their own butter



BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON

A preference for butter or margarine remains a long-standing debate among Canadian consumers. Does one have a better flavour? Is one a healthier choice? While today's shopper has a vast range of spreads to choose from, this was not the case for our pioneer ancestors.

In the early days of settlement in Lanark County, butter was the only choice.

Producing butter on the homestead was a laborious task, typically handled by women and older children. Most settlers kept at least one cow to provide the family with milk and butter. Fresh cow's milk was brought into the house and poured into a shallow pan to sit overnight allowing the cream to rise to the top.

The cream layer was skimmed the next morning with a wooden ladle and poured into a butter churn.

Although there were several types of churns used at that time, the most common consisted of a wooden or stoneware cylinder with a long wooden plunger or dasher used to manually pound the cream in a repetitive motion. As the dasher was pounded up and down the cream separated into buttermilk and grain-sized pellets of butter. The buttermilk was drained off and chilled for drinking, used in baking, or mixed with corn to feed the pigs. The butter pellets were rinsed with water, shaped with a wooden paddle, sprinkled with salt, pressed into a crock, and stored in a cool area of the house.

Farmers with more than a single cow produced surplus milk to sell for extra income, and farmers' wives often traded butter for dry goods and groceries at neighbourhood general stores.

In the early 1900s cheese factories and creameries began to open across Ontario and the number of homesteads producing their own butter dwindled. Dairies like Tyes in Smiths Falls, Chaplins in Perth and the Carleton Place Dairy, sold fresh butter, and many of the dairies provided home delivery, making the time-consuming chore of churning butter a relic of the past.

By the late 1800s margarine was manufactured in Canada as a more economical substitute for butter. Produced with beef fats and lard, early versions of margarine were white, with an unappetizing appearance. In the late 1880s producers began to colour the white margarine yellow to resemble butter and improve their profits.

When sales of the cheaper product began to impact the sale of butter dairy farmers pressured the government to stop the sale of margarine. By an act of Parliament in 1886 Canada the production and sale of margarine was strictly forbidden.

This ban continued until 1917 when it was lifted due to butter shortages during WWI, then reinstated in 1923. Finally, in 1948, the Supreme Court of Canada deemed the margarine ban to be unconstitutional, although any margarine sold had to be white. Some will recall a time when white margarine came with small capsules of dye so consumers could colour their spread at home. The white margarine law persisted until 1995 when the Ontario government repealed the ban and manufacturers could add colour.

In the decades that followed aggressive marketing promoted margarine as healthier, with claims of lowering bad cholesterol, providing a better alternative to saturated fats. By 2010 consumer trends reversed, with more recent studies revealing trans-fats present in hardened margarines. In response, many manufacturers reformulated their spreads using vegetable oils and olive oils.

Today, Ontario grocery stores offer butter along with a wide selection of spreads, butter alternatives, blended products, and so, for now, the decades-old debate continues. Whether you prefer a lighter vegetable-based spread on your morning toast, or a simple old-fashioned pat of butter, as the old saying goes – everything in moderation.

With a rich legacy of dairy farming in Lanark County the evolution of butter from the early days of our pioneer settlers to modern day, remains a fascinating part of our local culinary traditions and our agricultural history.

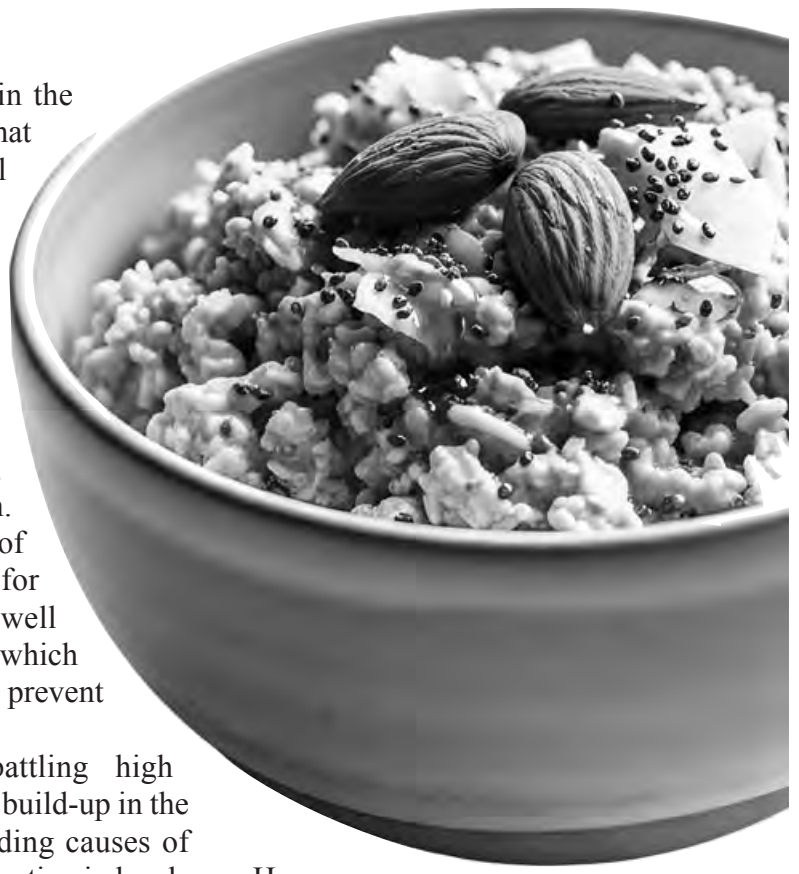
* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

* * *

Your Health

Which breakfast cereal is healthiest?



A recent study published in the journal *Nutrients* has found that the healthiest breakfast cereal is oatmeal porridge. Scientists say that eating a large bowl every day can cut cholesterol levels by 10% in just six weeks. A 300 gm (10.5 oz) bowl made with whole milk and water contains 216 calories, 6.9 g sugar, 4.8 g fat, 4.2 g fibre and 10 g protein. One bowl contains a seventh of your daily fibre needs, vital for preventing bowel cancer, as well as two eggs' worth of protein, which will boost muscle growth and prevent hunger pangs before lunch.

For people who are battling high cholesterol, a dangerous fatty build-up in the arteries that's one of the leading causes of heart attacks, even a small reduction in levels can slash the risk of heart attacks, stroke and even dementia. Oats naturally have a soluble fibre called beta-glucan, which helps reduce the absorption of cholesterol in the gut. A single bowl of porridge contains around half of the daily amount needed to lower so-called bad cholesterol.

However, for maximum benefits, choose plain rolled or steel-cut oats. If you find the taste bland, as many people do, you can add natural flavorings like fruit, nuts, or spices such as cinnamon. Instant flavored varieties usually contain added sugar and sodium, which can reduce its benefits.

Four habits that age you faster

While experts point to regular physical activity, a balanced diet and restorative sleep as the cornerstones of healthy aging, they say there are four other factors which are potential accelerators of biological aging: social isolation, circadian disruption, chronic stress and everyday environmental exposures.

Experts agree that social isolation and loneliness, namely a lack of consistent, meaningful community or social engagement, is the most underrated potential accelerator of biological aging. Socially and intellectually stimulating activities have been linked to improved cognitive function in older adults.

Circadian disruption refers to disruptions in the body's natural sleep-wake cycle. While quality sleep has become a major focus of the longevity conversation, circadian disruption itself is less often talked about. As we age, the body's production of melatonin can change, which may make it more difficult to maintain consistent sleep patterns. Strategies like exercising regularly, avoiding meals too close to bedtime and taking medication when recommended by a health care provider may help support a healthy circadian rhythm.

The small stresses of everyday life that seem minor on their own can build up over time, which contributes to low-grade, unmanaged psychological stress. Research suggests that chronic stress over time may contribute to biological aging, as prolonged stress can damage cells and contribute to chronic inflammation in the body.

Everyday environmental exposures such as microplastics and endocrine-disrupting chemicals are another overlooked factor when it comes to healthy aging. Research suggests that some environmental chemicals may interact with biological pathways involved in aging, including oxidative stress, mitochondrial dysfunction and chronic inflammation.

When asked about the most-overlooked factors specifically affecting women's healthy aging, experts pointed to loss of bone density and skeletal muscle during perimenopause and menopause, delayed recognition and treatment of heart disease, and suboptimal management of menopausal hormone therapy.

Is supermarket rotisserie chicken safe to eat?

There are few grocery store items as convenient and affordable as a rotisserie chicken. You can serve it alongside vegetables for a quick weeknight dinner or use the meat in soups and salads. However, if the chicken isn't cooked to a food-safe temperature or if it's held improperly, you could risk getting food poisoning.

The biggest thing to look for when shopping for rotisserie chicken is how those birds are stored. All poultry, including rotisserie chicken prepared in a grocery store, must be cooked to an internal temperature of 74°C or 165°F to prevent foodborne illness. Chicken should be held above 60°C or 140°F to remain out of the danger zone between 4°C or 40°F and 140°F, where bacteria can multiply rapidly.

If the grocery store doesn't display the temperature of its hot holding case, don't hesitate to ask an employee how long the chicken has been on display, when the holding temperature was last checked, and how often the chickens are rotated. The package should be intact and have a clear label indicating when it was prepared, and the skin should be a golden or dark brown. Avoid any chickens with excessively dried skin or shriveled meat or unusual odors, especially sour, sulfur-like odors.

Entertainment & Events

Smiths Falls settles into a busy fall season

The summer festival season may be over, but there is no shortage of entertainment on the Smiths Falls calendar as October brings fall markets, live theatre, music, ghost stories and Halloween celebrations before the town begins its shift toward Christmas.

The autumn fun begins Sunday, Oct. 4, when Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum hosts Fall Fest from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The family event will feature wagon rides, a vendor market, scavenger hunts, arts and crafts and registration for the Community Pumpkin Carving Contest. Seasonal treats will also be available.

Things become a little more mysterious on Thursday, Oct. 8, with the museum's Ghost Tour. Costumed interpreters will lead visitors through the candlelit 1860s house while recounting local ghost sightings, oral traditions and unexplained happenings associated with Smiths Falls. Admission is $10 for adults and $5 for children 12 and under, with advance registration required.

Thanksgiving weekend brings some shopping opportunities. The Thanksgiving Craft & Artisan Market runs Saturday, Oct. 10 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95. Local vendors will offer handmade creations, seasonal crafts, gift ideas and other fall finds.

Movie fans can head to Smiths Falls Community Theatre on Thursday, Oct. 15 for Film Night International screenings of Dancing on the Elephant at 2 and 7 p.m. The Canadian production stars Sheila McCarthy and Mary Walsh as two nursing-home residents determined to reclaim some adventure in their lives. Admission is $12.

The theatre then turns to murder and mystery when Agatha Christie's The Hollow opens Oct. 16 and continues through Oct. 25. The classic whodunit centres on a weekend gathering that takes a deadly turn, leaving a house full of people with possible motives. Adult tickets are $25 and student tickets are $10.

Music is also on the calendar Sunday, Oct. 18. Mary's Merry Minstrels takes over Trinity United Church at 2:30 p.m., promising an afternoon of fiddling, old-time country and gospel music.

For those who prefer their October entertainment on the frightening side, the Heritage House becomes the Haunted Heritage House Oct. 16-17 and again Oct. 23-24. Visitors will make their way through the historic home in the dark, and advance registration is strongly recommended because the attraction has sold out in previous years. The museum's Community Pumpkin Carving Contest and Pumpkin Walk also runs Oct. 23-31.

Saturday, Oct. 24 could be the busiest entertainment day of the month downtown. Skele-Bration runs from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., bringing Halloween-themed family activities to the core. After dark, the mood changes with the Smiths Falls Mystic Market, running from 5 to 9 p.m. on Russell Street East. The free market will feature vendors, tarot readings, crystals, handmade goods, oddities, vintage treasures and performers, with costumes welcome.

The calendar continues into November. The Smiths Falls Annual Art Showcase is scheduled from Nov. 8 to Dec. 19, while the town's Celebration of Lights is listed from Nov. 12 through Jan. 4. Nov. 28 is shaping up as another major day, with the Downtown Cookie Crawl and the first scheduled North Pole Express at the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario. Additional North Pole Express dates are listed for Dec. 5 and Dec. 13.

December will bring Holiday Heritage House on Dec. 6 and the Smiths Falls Santa Claus Parade on Dec. 12, giving residents plenty of reasons to keep the entertainment calendar handy well after Halloween has passed.

Event dates and details can change; readers should check with organizers before attending.

You can reach Smiths Falls with your newspaper

If you have a message for the residents of Smiths Falls and adjacent townships the most effective way to reach them is an advertisement in this weekly newspaper. For information call today at 613-299-6672. Or reach us by email at: smithsfalls.journal@gmail.com

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UCDSB launches student and family support office

The Upper Canada District School Board has launched a new Student and Family Support Office aimed at giving families a clearer way to raise concerns and seek help when issues arise at school.

Chief Education Officer Shelley Riddell provided trustees with an update on the initiative during the board's Sept. 9 meeting.

The office became fully operational on Sept. 1, 2026, with information distributed to staff and families explaining how to access the service and what they can expect after making an inquiry.

According to the board, the goal is to create a clear and consistent process that is easier for families to navigate when they have concerns involving their child's experience at school.

Inquiries submitted to the Student and Family Support Office are to be acknowledged within two business days.

The board's goal is then to provide a response, or identify the next steps required to address the concern, within five business days.

If more time is needed to review an issue, families will be kept informed about the status of their inquiry.

The office is intended to provide families with a central point of contact and help ensure concerns are directed to the appropriate staff or department for followup.

The initiative also gives the school board a more standardized process for tracking and responding to family inquiries across the UCDSB.

The board serves schools throughout a large portion of eastern Ontario, making consistency in communication and access to support an important part of its relationship with students and families.

Riddell told trustees the new office is now fully in place as the 2026-27 school year gets underway.

Get ahead with digital edition

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The digital edition is compact and reader-friendly on most computer screens and the colour is vivid.

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Champions for Kids Foundation helping underprivileged students

The Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) Champions for Kids Foundation seeks to level the playing field for students in Eastern Ontario. In an era where many families struggle to meet basic needs, Champions for Kids supports students by helping them take part in sporting activities, music lessons or other opportunities in our communities so they can thrive beyond school walls. The Foundation also offers families in need a helping hand when life becomes challenging due to unforeseen circumstances. Since its inception in 2008, the foundation has raised over $2 million for students and families. This year C4K has given more than $130,000 to students and families in the UCDSB. The foundation's success can be attributed to the generous donations and volunteer work from its community partners and employees of the school board. If you would like to contribute, please consult https://ow.ly/zNBj50T45aa

OBITUARIES

DESJARDINS
Gerald O.

APRIL 7, 1930 – SEPTEMBER 18, 2026



Gerald passed away in Perth on Friday September 18th 2026 at the age of 96 years.

He was son of the late Antoine and Josephine (Renaud) Desjardins and father of the late Arthur Desjardins. He will be sadly missed by all his family; his wife of 72 years Emma (Echlin) Desjardins, daughter Emily, son Cyril (Chistine), sons Gerald and Glenn (Kellie); grandchildren Jacob, Brad (Jenn), Rachael (Ryan), Noel, Jeremy, Jason, Justine (Ben), Danielle, Tyler (Stephanie) and Jordan; great grandchildren Cassia (Jaden), Nadan, Zahlya, Madison and Remy; his sister-in-law Margaret Milotte and numerous nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by brothers Mike Riopelle, A.J., Leonard and Jimmy, and sisters Catherine Sherwood, Carmel Watt, Annetta Simpson and Eleanor Milotte.

In 2001 he received a Commendation Award for his acts of assistance and selfless manner. He was a craftsman especially known for his 17 fiddles and music spoons he carved with precision. Known for his sense of humour, he was an avid fisherman and hunter and known for his unique way of reciting poems (some questionable) and gardening. His working career took a number of directions, Millard Towers, carpentry, Frost and Wood, logging and he retired from Central Wire in Perth. Three days before he passed he sang the whole song of "Second week of Deer Camp"; he will be missed.

Friends payed their respects at the Blair & Son Funeral Home, 15 Gore St. W. Perth on Wednesday September 23rd, 2026 from 4:00 to 8:00 P.M. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Sacred Heart Church, Lanark on Thursday September 24th, 2026 at 10:00 A.M. Interment, Sacred Heart Cemetery, Lanark.

Those wishing are asked to consider memorial donations to the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) or the Diabetic Society.

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For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com



HUSDON
John Gordon

Passed away at his home in Cornwall on September 13th, 2026, in his 90th year. Born in Almonte, Ontario, John's early work took him to Perth with the Lanark County Road Department, and then Stittsville, with the City of Nepean, Road Department. In 1975 he entered Carleton University, followed by Queen's Theological College, Kingston, earning a Master of Theology degree. In 1982, following ordination by the United Church of Canada he ministered to the Pembina Pastoral Charge in Alberta. This was followed by 7 years as Protestant Chaplain in Kingston and Millhaven penitentiaries. After an extended period of ill health, he returned to pastoral ministry with the Lanark and Balderson Pastoral Charge in Renfrew Presbytery, when again, health required early retirement.

John is survived by his wife Carolyn, sons Michael (Susan), Karl (Nicole) and daughter Patricia (Mark), and grandsons, Zachary (Christina), Cameron (Kimberly), Dylan and Benjamin Comeau, and sisters-in-law Judith and Wendy Simmons. He was predeceased by his son Alexander, and parents, Gordon B.T. Hudson and J. Anna G. Laidlaw, and brother Robert (Connie).

Honouring his wishes, John's body was donated to the Ottawa University Medical School for education and research. His cremated remains will be returned to the family at a later date when a private service will be held at the Auld Kirk Cemetery in Almonte.

In memory of John, donations may be made to the University of Ottawa Heart Institute Foundation, the Ottawa University, Anatomy Memorial Trust Fund, or United Church of Canada Mission and Service Fund.

OBITUARIES

KELLY
Mary Joan (Bethune)

MAY 19, 1963 – SEPTEMBER 11, 2026



Our beloved Mom concluded her courageous three-year journey with cancer on September 11, 2026. She passed away very peacefully at home with her children, Robin and Shawn, lovingly by her side.

Mom lives on in the vibrant memories and endless love of her children, Robin Kelly and Shawn Kelly, who will forever celebrate the incredible life she shared with them. She was predeceased by her beloved eldest brother, David Bethune (February 2026). She leaves behind her brother, Stephen Bethune; nephew, Adam Bethune; loving and devoted partner, Scott MacKay; Kevin Kelly, with whom she shared over 25 years of marriage; sisters-in-laws, Lisa Kelly, Judy Bethune and Zale Bethune; brother-in-law Shawn Harper; and her many cherished relatives, friends. Among them, Cindy Penman, her soul sister with whom she shared a deep and lasting friendship of over 40 years. She is also remembered by her dear friend, Jo-Ann Crozier, whose legendary bond was built on laughter, loyalty, and closeness where they could finish each other's sentences.

All who knew her are welcome to attend and share in celebrating Joan's life at Rideau Christian Fellowship Church 8 Craig St, Perth, on Saturday, October 3, 2026, at 11:00 AM.

In honour of Joan, memorial contributions to the Kingston Health Sciences Centre – Cancer Care, The Perth & District Union Public Library or the Lanark Animal Welfare Society (LAWS) would be greatly appreciated by the family.

Arrangements are in the care of Blair & Son Funeral Home, Perth.

For Joan's full obituary please see our website at www.blairandson.com

Blair & Son Funeral Home
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For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com



Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of an obituary in this newspaper. Or, you can call us directly at 1-514-503-1593. Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.



TYSICK
Sandra Faye
(nee Turcotte)

MAY 26 1944 – SEPT. 21, 2026

Sandra passed away peacefully at Perth hospital on September 21st 2026 after a courageous battle with cancer.

She was the beloved wife of John Vincent (Vince) Tysick for 62 years, Sandra was a devoted mother to Sandra Deborah, Tara and Kirk; loving grandmother to Alexander (Amanda) and Braden, and proud great-grandmother to Mira and Ridley. She is survived by her siblings; Beverley Beath and Jim Turcotte (MaryAnn).

She was a proud member of the Perth Civitan club, was passionate about bingo, the Toronto Blue Jays and her beloved cat Tony. She will be remembered for her immense strength, resilience and love for her family.

Family and friends will gather at the Perth Civitan Hall, 6787 Lanark County Rd 43, Perth on Thursday October 1st, 2026 from 4:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. A Memorial to Sandra will be held at 4:30 P.M. The family extends their deep gratitude for the Perth Hospital Staff for their compassionate care.

Those wishing to make a donation in Sandra's memory, the Foundation of the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital or the Lanark Animal Welfare Society, (L.A.W.S) would be appreciated.

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IN MEMORIAM



McLAREN
Andrew David

OCT. 19, 1977 – SEPT. 28, 1996

In loving memory of a dear son, brother & uncle taken from us 30 years ago in a car crash.

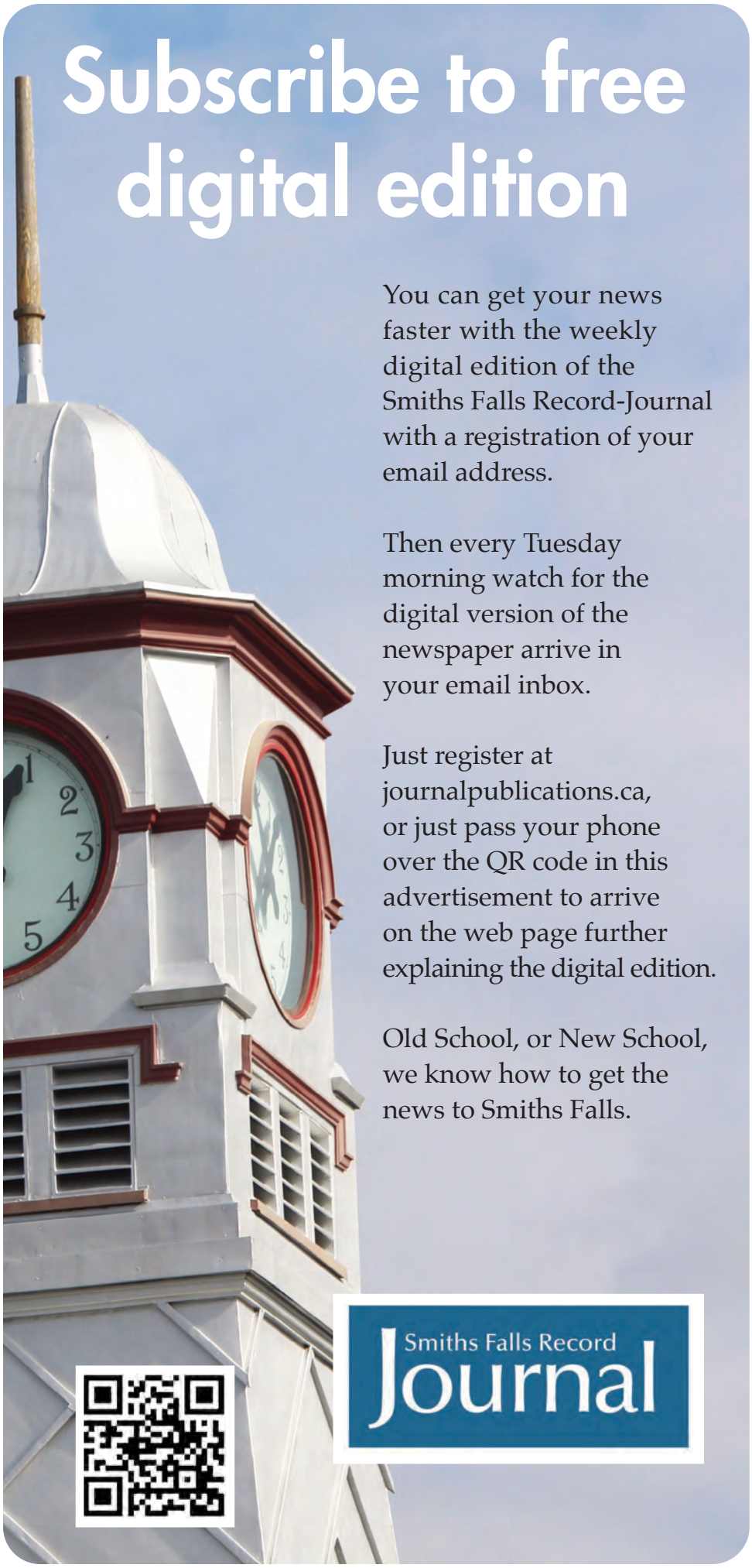
To lose someone so special
has filled us with such grief
the kind of pain & heartache
that only time can relieve

There's still a sun up in the sky,
life goes on day by day
But the world lost something precious
when you passed away

Life sometimes feels hopeless,
the world often feels blue.
But what give us strength & hope
are our treasured memories of you.

We're missing someone wonderful
and truly dear to us.
You were loved so very much
and that's how you'll always remain.

Forever in our hearts,
Mom, Dad, Stephanie,
Blade & Norm



Over Rideau Canal

Bridges repair to cost more than $6.2-mil.

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Smiths Falls Town council approved a pair of contracts – totalling more than $6.2 million – for the Rideau Canal Bridges Rehabilitation Project during the September 14 committee of the whole meeting.

The first pact, for the construction work, was awarded to Ottawa-based KV Civil Contractors Inc., in the amount of $5,486,602.66 (including net HST), while an award for contract administration and inspection services – to an upset limit of $735,114.24 (including net HST) – went to TSI Inc., of Kingston, Ont.

The project includes the rehabilitation of the New Lock Bridge, similar work on the pedestrian underpass bridge, and upgrades to the Beckwith Street/Lombard Street/Brockville Street/Jasper Avenue intersection, including improvements to street lighting infrastructure in that area.

Paul McMunn, Smiths Falls' Director of Public Works and Utilities, pointed out that the project is funded primarily through Intake 11 of the Ministry of Transportation-administered Connecting Links Program, "which we (the Town) were successful with," resulting in funding that covers 90 percent of "eligible costs" for the initiative.

The Town picks up the remaining 10 percent.

Using that formula, the Province is shelling out approximately $6.6 million of the total costs and the Town is paying just under $735,000, with that share coming from the municipal capital reserve fund.

McMunn told council that "current estimates indicate approximately $1.13 million may remain available within the approved funding envelope after construction and inspection costs are accounted for."

He added that Town staff "intend to explore directing a portion of these funds towards accessibility and active transportation improvements at the Beckwith/Lombard intersection, subject to Ministry (of Transportation) approval."

McMunn also explained that the "bridge work proper" portion of the project will get underway soon.

"There's a requirement that much of the bridge work that we're doing with the abutment walls and the work that we need to do to the underside of the soffit of those structures has to happen outside of the navigation season



Paul McMunn,
Director of Public Works

(on the Rideau Canal)," he said.

"As we know, the basin is drained (by Parks Canada) and the Canal, shortly thereafter, around Thanksgiving (and into mid-November). And then, generally speaking, they fill up the basin for navigation around Victoria Day weekend in May.

Work window

"So, we have that window between October through May to get the work done on the bridge," added McMunn.

The Town learned this past February that its grant application to Intake 11 of the Connecting Links Program – submitted in October 2025 – was successful.

Smiths Falls' $6.6 million grant was part of over $46 million, covering 21 projects, to repair roads and bridges in 20 municipalities across Ontario that the Province is investing in through the Connecting Links Program's 2026/2027 cycle.

According to the MTO, a connecting link is a designated municipal road or bridge that connects two ends of a provincial highway through a community or to an international border crossing.

Eligible costs under the program include the design, construction, renewal, rehabilitation and replacement of designated municipal roads and bridges.

At Town's behest

Subway overpass seeing light repairs by railway company

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Discussions regarding ownership, structural integrity, and responsibility-related matters pertaining to the Chambers Street subway/underpass in Smiths Falls' east-end Atironto neighbourhood continue between municipal staff and Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) railway officials, according to Town CAO Malcolm Morris.

"I wanted to take an opportunity to provide a verbal update on some of the conservations that have been occurring with our friends at the Canadian Pacific Kansas City railway," Morris said during the CAO/Directors Verbal Reports segment of the September 8 special committee of the whole meeting.

"There's been a bit of attention on the Chambers Street grade-separated crossing (the subway). I just want to assure council and the public that …it's an active file. We're working on two fronts related to that crossing."

One "front" pertains to the structural stability of the crossing/overhead train bridge, while the other involves ownership/responsibility.

Morris explained that the Calgary-based railway sent an "engineering technical crew" at the end of June to conduct an inspection of the subway, and that the group returned the following month to do some minor repairs.

The Town's Director of Public Works and Utilities, Paul McMunn, described what those repairs entailed.

"They removed the pieces that were delaminated from the mass concrete of the approaches coming into the underpass, as well as some pieces that were underneath the bridge proper," said McMunn, who during the May 4 C.O.W. session told council that "very high level" conversations about Chambers Street subway matters were taking place among Town staff, CPKC representatives and federal authorities.

"I think they put some netting up as well… But they did address some of our immediate concerns," regarding appearance.

Following that touch-up work and the inspection, the CAO told council that the railway's engineering team "confirmed to us that they feel that the structure is stable. There's no risk in their mind of failure, although, admittedly, from an aesthetic point of view, it…could be improved."

He added that, "structurally, which I think is most important, it is sound."

Discussions regarding ownership of the subway and surrounding properties led to an unexpected revelation.

"On a typical rail crossing, the rail authority owns the suspended structure that the tracks sit on, and everything that supports that structure…and is responsible to maintain it. And in a typical circumstance, the road authority, in this case the Town, would own the approaches to the grade-separated crossing," said the CAO.

"This one's a little bit different. And we've unearthed some records from 1914 to 1916 (when the subway was constructed) that might suggest this installation is a little bit different than a typical one. We have not been able to prove that, but we've done some research."

Morris added that the Town has retained legal counsel to help "sort through that information," and that the municipality has also "reached out to" the Canadian Transportation Agency which "will facilitate a dispute between a railway and a road authority, or an adjacent landowner," if required, and is also "a quasi-judicial body that can render a decision" on a dispute.

"We hope we can work it out, but there is that lever that we could pull if we needed to, to bring clarity," said Morris.

"I just want to assure council that we're looking at the history behind that installation to understand who owns what, and then we can decide on what type of remedial work might be necessary, once we do determine that."

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- Arts/Culture
- Philanthropy

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Award details, including the nomination form can be found online at www.lanarkcounty.ca

The deadline to apply is **October 2, 2026**. Awards will be presented at the first County Council meeting in November.

Completed applications and/or questions may be addressed to:

Lanark County Clerk's Office
c/o Megan Beson, Deputy Clerk
99 Christie Lake Road, Perth, ON K7H 3C6
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Email: mbeson@lanarkcounty.ca

144496

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144564

Old Capitol Theatre building could get a minor makeover — Page 9

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2026 SMITHS FALLS, ONTARIO SMITHSFALLS.JOURNAL@GMAIL.COM

Smiths Falls Record
Journal



Downtown Master Plan will mark town

PAGE 3

Police board tables new strategic plan

PAGE 2

On Saturday, Oct. 24, Halloween fun returns with Skele-Bration from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The family-friendly event welcomes young ghouls and their grown-ups for seasonal activities in the downtown core.



Ongoing investigations update from SF Police

A collision now being investigated by Ontario's police watchdog, a suspicious fire, an ongoing vehicle-theft investigation and developments in a major drug probe have highlighted police activity in and around Smiths Falls since mid-September.

The most recent incident occurred early Wednesday, Sept. 30, when Smiths Falls Police Service officers responded to a single-vehicle collision on Queen Street near Albert Street.

Police said an officer had attempted to stop the vehicle at about 4:24 a.m. in connection with a criminal investigation and traffic offences. The driver allegedly failed to stop and left the area before the vehicle was involved in a collision a short time later.

The driver was taken to hospital.

Ontario's Special Investigations Unit has invoked its mandate and Smiths Falls police said they cannot release further information while the SIU investigation is underway. The SIU investigates incidents involving police that may have resulted in death, serious injury, sexual assault allegations or the discharge of a firearm at a person.

County
POLICE BLOTTER

Earlier in the month, police continued investigating an Aug. 29 incident involving vehicles on Lombard Street.

Police said four males were reported trying to gain access to parked vehicles. Officers located four people matching descriptions provided by witnesses, but police allege they ran when officers arrived.

Following a foot pursuit, a 21-year-old Smiths Falls man was arrested and charged with theft under $5,000 and failing to comply with an undertaking. He was released with conditions and is expected to appear in court at a later date.

Police said investigators are continuing efforts to identify the other three individuals. None of the allegations has been proven in court.

Police and fire investigators were also called to a suspicious blaze Sept. 21 at a storage facility on Lombard Street just outside Smiths Falls in Rideau Lakes Township.

Leeds County OPP secured the scene, with OPP Forensic Identification Services and the Office of the Fire Marshal assisting. Smiths Falls firefighters, Rideau Lakes firefighters and Smiths Falls police also attended. Police described the fire as suspicious and appealed to anyone with information to contact investigators.

The period also saw another development in Project STIR 2.0, a joint Smiths Falls-Ottawa police drug-trafficking investigation.

Police said a fifth search warrant was executed at a Smiths Falls residence Sept. 11, resulting in the seizure of approximately 49 grams of cocaine and $6,305 in Canadian currency alleged to be proceeds of crime.

Kimberlynn Crystal Harper, 30, of Smiths Falls was charged with cocaine trafficking and possession of cocaine for the purpose of trafficking. Police said the broader investigation remains active.

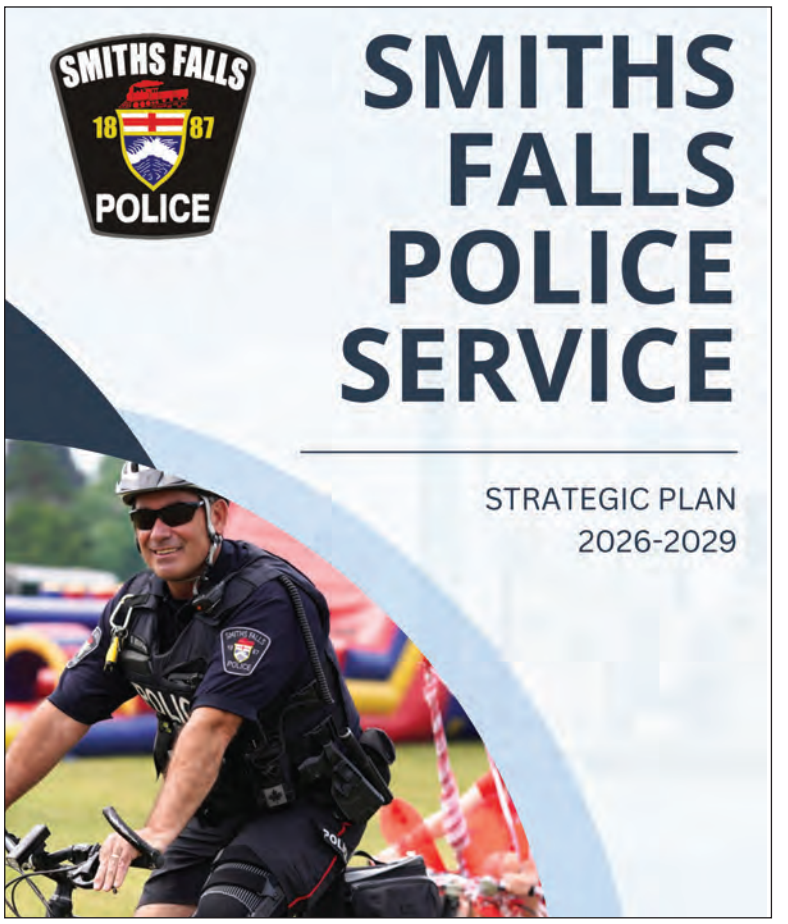
Those charges have not been proven in court.

Anyone with information about criminal activity in Smiths Falls can contact Smiths Falls Police Service at 613-283-0357 or provide information anonymously through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

Focused on safety, trust and partnerships

Police board tables new strategic plan

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN



The Smiths Falls Police Service Board has tabled a draft strategic plan that would guide local policing through 2029, with priorities ranging from crime prevention and police visibility to mental-health response, community partnerships and officer wellness.

The draft Smiths Falls Police Service Strategic Plan 2026-2029 was developed using crime and operational data, community surveys, stakeholder consultations, town halls and feedback from police employees. The board says the process was intended to reflect both community concerns and the changing demands facing the municipal police service.

Four strategic pillars form the backbone of the proposal: strengthening community safety and crime prevention; building trust through engagement and transparency; expanding partnerships and support for vulnerable populations; and investing in people and operational excellence.

Community safety remains a major focus.

Under the first pillar, the plan proposes increasing police visibility in areas of higher need, using a visible presence to deter crime and strengthening relationships with residents. It also calls for a more coordinated approach to mental-health calls and homelessness, including referrals designed to connect people with appropriate community services and reduce repeat police calls.

Survey results helped shape those priorities. About 240 people participated in the community survey, with 69 per cent saying they felt very or somewhat safe in Smiths Falls. Drug-related activity was identified as the leading community safety concern, followed by mental-health incidents, domestic violence, violent crime and property crime.

The survey also found 72 per cent of respondents considered having a local police service that understands Smiths Falls and its particular needs very or extremely important. Sixty-six per cent said they were comfortable approaching an officer, while 71 per cent rated their most recent experience with Smiths Falls police as good or excellent. The report identifies response time and follow-up as areas where improvement remains possible.

The draft paints a mixed picture of local crime trends. Police report the overall crime rate fell 10 per cent between 2022 and 2025, while clearance rates increased seven per cent and property crime declined 25 per cent. Average 911 response time was approximately four minutes.

Heavier demands

At the same time, the plan says Smiths Falls continues to face heavier policing demands than its size might suggest. The document lists a 2025 Crime Severity Index of 92.7, compared with an Ontario figure of 57.17, while noting Smiths Falls' index declined 10.5 per cent from 2024.

Operational pressures identified in the plan include increasingly complex investigations and calls involving mental health, addictions and housing. The document also points to a staffing gap among sergeants and detectives that can affect supervision of complex investigations.

Police employees identified leadership development and succession planning as their leading internal priority, followed by recruitment and retention, technology modernization, and employee wellness and mental health.

The plan also calls for stronger public communication, more opportunities for residents to provide input and improved transparency about police priorities and results.

Board chair Christopher Saumure describes the document as a roadmap for accountable, community-focused policing, saying its success will depend on collaboration, accountability and turning priorities into action.

The document remains a draft, with some performance measures still being developed before the final version is completed.

It started 13 years ago

Downtown Master Plan will mark town forever

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Smiths Falls town council is pleased with the results of the municipality's Downtown Revitalization and Waterfront Integration Master Plan (DRWIMP) over the decade-plus since its release.

"Councillor (Jay) Brennan, Councillor (Dawn) Quinn and I were all councillors back in 2013 when this was approved," said Mayor Shawn Pankow, following a report on the status of the Master Plan presented by the Town's Manager of Development Services Karl Grenke during the September 28 committee of the whole meeting.

"And the results over the last 13 years, I think, demonstrate that when you have a vision…It does take time for the vision to come together…but you follow that vision, and positive things will happen."

Councillor Peter McKenna was also impressed.

"Just to note how rare this is, to have a long-term plan…where you can see progress on every one of its recommendations," he said.

"I want to thank the three sitting council members here tonight who had that vision… These (documents) are critical to guide future councils for decades to come."

Coun. McKenna also expressed his gratitude to Town staff, for "making this a reality, and delivering… on all of the deliverables" outlined in the Master Plan.

According to a staff report prepared by Grenke, the DRWIMP, "built on master planning work done by the Economic Development Department around 2010, including a Tourism Master Plan, Downtown Master Plan and others," was presented to council in May 2013, "at a time of significant economic change in the Town of Smiths Falls, which included industrial and commercial departures, as well as some new residential development."

Among the factors impacting the local economy during this period were closures of the Hershey chocolate factory in 2008, Stanley Tools/Works in the same year, the Rideau Regional Centre in 2009, and Shorewood Packaging in 2014 – all of which had been preceded by a decades-long downsizing of Canadian Pacific Railway operations in town.

Grenke pointed out that the DRWIMP was "intended to establish a framework to guide the revitalization of the downtown area and develop its connection with the Rideau Canal landscape."

And while the former was addressed with a number of projects – primarily the two-phase, $13.7 million Beckwith Street Revitalization Project that took place between October 2019 and October 2022 – Grenke admitted that there is still work to be done regarding the latter.

"With a supportive planning policy framework and several large capital investments downtown, the Town has advanced considerably on the guiding principles outlined in the (Downtown Revitalization and Waterfront Integration) Master Plan," Grenke stated in his staff report.

Waterfront integration

"The aspects of the Master Plan that have been less achieved to date include the 'waterfront integration' aspect… as well as ongoing challenges with business attraction and retention.

"It is noted that completion of these items is encumbered by conditions outside council's exclusive control, such as economic pressures and intergovernmental relations, particularly with Parks Canada."

Despite these obstacles, Grenke added that a revision of the Master Plan is not presently required.

"At this time, staff do not envision the need for council to undertake a formal update to the DRWIMP," he said. "However, staff recommend that council continues to focus on those remaining items, while guided by the DRWIMP's guiding principles."



'It is noted that completion of these items is encumbered by conditions outside council's exclusive control'

Karl Grenke
Manager of Development

Renovictions bylaw is in the works at council — Page 19

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

Farming

Past Liberal candidate

Foxton strikes optimistic note at a Frontenac farmers' annual meeting

Former federal Liberal candidate Michelle Foxton struck an optimistic tone about the future of farming while addressing members of the Frontenac Federation of Agriculture at the organization's annual general meeting.

Foxton, who represented the Liberals in Lanark–Frontenac in the April 2025 federal election, thanked farmers and agricultural advocates for keeping rural concerns before governments. Elections Canada records show she finished second in that contest with 30,900 votes, or 45.6 per cent.

"A sincere thank you to the farmers, organizers and volunteers who continue to do such important work keeping our communities informed about agriculture and making sure the voices of farmers are heard by all levels of government," Foxton told the gathering.

Land preservation was among the issues highlighted during the meeting, with Foxton pointing to the limited amount of Ontario land suitable for high-quality agricultural production.

She said protecting productive farmland has become increasingly important in an era of uncertain international trade and food supply pressures.

"At a time of global uncertainty, protecting the land that produces our food and supporting the families who farm it is increasingly a matter of food security and economic resilience," she said.

Ontario planning policy describes prime agricultural land as specialty crop areas and Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2, and 3 lands and requires municipalities to protect designated prime agricultural areas for long-term agricultural use.

Foxton also highlighted recent federal and federal-provincial agricultural programs.

The federal Advance Payments Program currently allows eligible producers access to as much as $1 million in cash

Continued on the next page



MICHELLE Foxton meets a farmer at Frontenac meeting.

advances. For the 2026 program year, the interest-free limit is $250,000 for most commodities, while special provisions provide a $500,000 interest-free limit for canola advances.

Temporary changes to AgriStability for the 2025 program year increased the compensation rate from 80 to 90 per cent and doubled the maximum payment from $3 million to $6 million.

Canada and Ontario have also allocated up to $20 million to the Market Diversification and Trade Resiliency Initiative to help producers and processors develop domestic and international markets. Another $12 million was announced in June for the Agricultural Stewardship Initiative, supporting projects involving areas such as energy efficiency, soil health and water quality.

"These programs don't eliminate the very real pressures farmers are facing, but they are meaningful steps that demonstrate what can happen when farmers have a voice at the table and different levels of government work together," Foxton said.

Property taxation

Property taxation remains one of those pressures.

Eligible Ontario farmland is generally taxed at no more than 25 per cent of the local residential property tax rate, although farmhouses and the acre surrounding them are taxed at the residential rate. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture is advocating for the provincial maximum farm tax ratio to be lowered from 25 to 15 per cent.

Foxton said major infrastructure projects were also discussed, including proposed high-speed rail and the importance of involving agricultural organizations when projects could affect farmland.

"Good infrastructure planning and protecting agriculture should not be competing goals," she said.

Foxton said the meeting reinforced the importance of farmers having a voice in decisions involving taxes, infrastructure, trade and land-use planning.

"Our farmers do far more than put food on our tables," she said. "They are an essential part of our communities, our economy and Canada's food security."

Early StatsCan estimates

County population climbs to nearly 85,000

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN

Lanark County's population continues to climb, with new Statistics Canada estimates placing the area's population at nearly 85,000 people.

Statistics Canada estimates the population of the Lanark census division reached 84,820 as of July 1, 2025, up from 83,500 a year earlier and 78,669 in 2021. That represents an increase of about 1,320 people, or 1.6 per cent, in one year and more than 6,100 residents since 2021.

The estimates show some of the strongest growth continues to be centred in Carleton Place and Smiths Falls.

Carleton Place was estimated at 14,837 residents in 2025, compared with 14,447 in 2024 and 13,064 in 2021. That amounts to growth of nearly 14 per cent over four years.

Smiths Falls showed an even larger percentage increase. Statistics Canada estimated the town's population at 11,093, up from 10,536 in 2024 and 9,619 in 2021 — an increase of more than 15 per cent since 2021.

Mississippi Mills remained the largest individual municipality in the area, with an estimated 16,073 residents, compared with 15,984 the previous year and 15,298 in 2021.

Perth's estimated population increased to 6,972, up from 6,856 in 2024 and 6,685 in 2021.

Beckwith Township reached an estimated 10,073, passing the 10,000 mark after being estimated at 9,996 a year earlier. Its estimated population stood at 9,401 in 2021.

Growth was slower in Drummond/North Elmsley, where the population was estimated at 8,817, compared with 8,799 in 2024 and 8,457 in 2021.

Montague Township's estimated population rose to 4,414, up from 4,351 the previous year and 4,073 in 2021.

The figures are estimates rather than census counts. Statistics Canada produces annual population estimates using census data adjusted for factors such as births, deaths and migration. The agency says its 2025 figures are preliminary postcensal estimates.

The next major test of Lanark County's growth will come with results from the 2026 Census, providing new official population and dwelling counts and a clearer picture of how rapidly communities have changed since the 2021 census.

The continuing rise in population has implications for municipalities across Lanark County as they plan for housing, roads, water and sewer capacity, recreation facilities, health care and emergency services.

Police cruiser collision is under investigation

The province's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) has invoked its mandate following a two-vehicle collision involving a police vehicle in Lanark County.

On Wednesday, September 30, 2026, shortly before 2:00 p.m., an officer with the Lanark County Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) was responding in a police vehicle to assist with an investigation. The police vehicle was subsequently involved in a two-vehicle collision on Highway 7 near Townline Road.

The driver of the other vehicle, a 71-year-old from Ottawa, was transported to hospital with serious injuries. The officer sustained minor injuries.

The OPP notified the SIU, which invoked its mandate. As a result, the OPP will not be able to provide further information. Any media inquiries related to the SIU investigation should be directed to SIU Communications at siu.media@ontario.ca.

3-minutes with PETER BLACK

Columnist Peter Black will return next week after a brief break.



Lanark County farmers to attend OFA meeting Oct. 8

Farmers and agricultural community members from across Lanark County will have an opportunity to discuss local priorities and help shape the direction of Ontario's largest general farm organization when the Ontario Federation of Agriculture holds its annual regional meeting next month.

The 2026 OFA Regional Meeting for Lanark County is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 8, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Lanark Civitan Hall, 2144 Pine Grove Road in Lanark.

The meeting is part of a province-wide series of gatherings organized by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture to give members a chance to connect with fellow farmers, discuss issues affecting agriculture and provide input on priorities facing the industry.

According to the OFA, regional meetings allow members to learn more about the work of their local federation, meet their provincial director and member service representative and raise concerns directly with agricultural leaders.

Eligible OFA members will also have an opportunity to elect local representatives to the organization's Policy Advisory Council and select delegates for the OFA's 2026 annual general meeting, which is scheduled for Nov. 24 and 25 in Toronto.

SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

TOWN PAGE

SMITHS FALLS

OCTOBER 7, 2026

MUNICIPAL ELECTION 2026

VOTE!

The Town of Smiths Falls will hold the Municipal Election on Monday, October 26, 2026. This year, eligible Smiths Falls voters can vote at anytime and anywhere starting Monday, October 19, 2026, at 8:30 AM to Monday, October 26, 2026, at 8:00 PM using internet-telephone voting. There will be no paper ballot. In early October, each person on the voters' list shall be mailed a sealed Voter Information Letter. Eligible voters who have not received their voter information letter in the mail by October 13 should visit the help center at Town Hall with proper identification. To be added, deleted or to make any other corrections to the Voters List, please contact Giselle Nayel at the Town Hall (***613-283-4124, Ext. 1125*** or ***gnayel@smithsfalls.ca***). Amendments can be made during normal office hours beginning September 1 up to and including the close of voting on October 26 at 8 p.m. The Voter Identification Letter Includes a unique Personal Identification Number (PIN) which will be required to vote. Voters using the internet method will log on to the election website, enter their pin and birthdate, then proceed to mark their ballots electronically. Voters using Telephone method will dial into a toll-free number, enter their PIN, then proceed to follow a touch tone menu to enter their votes.

As with previous elections, a help centre with a computer/telephone for voting will be established at Town Hall for eligible voters who need assistance with voting or those with no access to internet/telephone.

To revise information on the Voters' List (if needed), get general election information or have your election questions answered, the hours of operation are as follows:

- September 1 to October 23 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM (Monday to Friday)
- Saturday, October 24 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM
- October 26 8:30 AM to 8:00 PM

For further information, contact Town Hall at ***613-283-4124*** or visit ***smithsfalls.ca/election***.

DROP-IN PUBLIC SKATE PROGRAMS

Looking for a fun way to stay active this winter? The Memorial Community Centre and Youth Arena offer a variety of drop-in skating programs for all ages and skill levels. Whether you're enjoying a leisurely Public Skate, introducing your little one to the ice during Parent & Tot Skate, or hitting the ice with friends during Adult Shinny, there's something for everyone this season. Visit ***smithsfalls.ca/recreation*** for the full schedule, program details, fees, and any schedule updates. Get active, have fun, and make the most of winter at your local arenas!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SF

Stay up-to-date on community events by signing up for our e-newsletter! For further information, visit: ***smithsfalls.ca/whatshappening.*** Follow us on Facebook: ***@experiencesmithsfalls.***

COUNCIL MEETINGS

October 13, 2026 Committee of the Whole Meeting 5 PM
October 19, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council 5 PM
Attend in person at Town Hall (77 Beckwith Street North) or view live streamed proceedings on:
Facebook - facebook.com/townofsmithsfalls
YouTube - Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
For Council, Committee and Board meeting agendas, visit: smithsfalls.ca/meeting

RECYCLING & GARBAGE REMINDERS

Recycling collection in Smiths Falls is managed by Circular Materials, with pickup provided locally by Miller Waste Systems (TOPPS Environmental Solutions). You can recycle more than ever, including:

✔ Flexible plastics (plastic bags, chip bags, bubble wrap)
✔ Foam packaging (meat trays, takeout containers, cups)
✔ Tubes (toothpaste, deodorant, hand cream)

Not sure where cartons go? Milk, cream, juice and other beverage cartons belong in your container box, not with paper products. Recycling must be placed at the curb by 7 AM on your scheduled collection day to ensure pickup. If your recycling has been missed, or if you require a bin replacement or have collection questions, please contact Miller Waste directly at ***1-888-852-2374*** or ***area2@millerwaste.ca.*** For a list of acceptable materials, please visit: ***circularmaterials.ca/smithsfalls.***



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144578

Hospital is being swept up in provincial doctor shortage

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Recruiting efforts have yielded some success, but an alarmingly high number of visitors to the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital are still without a family physician.

"Seventy percent of the people going to the emergency department have no family doctor," Carlene MacDonald, Physician Recruiter for the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital, told council during her annual report presented during the Smiths Falls committee of the whole meeting of September 28.

According to figures released by the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) in December 2025, "more than 2.5 million Ontarians currently do not have access to a family physician."

With Statistics Canada reporting that the province's population as of July 1, 2026 was 16,262,121, that means 15.4 percent of Ontario residents are without access to a family doctor.

The numbers are similar nationwide.

A December 2025 survey released by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) states that "an estimated 5.9 million adults do not have a family doctor, nurse practitioner or primary care team they see regularly."

Given Canada's current population of 41,798,407, that equals 14 percent.

Back on the local front, there is some positive news – regarding recruiting.

"I'd say we did better this year than we have in previous years," said MacDonald.

"When I was looking back at my other reports to put this (report) together, I counted about 37 physicians that we've recruited in the past 10 years… So, this year is quite a bit better."

According to MacDonald, over the past year, the hospital was successful in recruiting a full-time radiologist from Montreal, four locum, or virtual, radiologists "who are helping out with the workload," four new anesthetists, who are also "mostly locum and part-time," a new surgical assistant, and one new psychiatrist who will work with Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Addictions and Mental Health.

MacDonald explained that the term 'locum' refers to a medical professional who is "part-time, casual," who "might do one or two shifts a month," or "just come on a weekend."

The hospital has not lost any physicians over the last year.

And while some strides have been made as far as family medicine, recruiting and maintaining staffing levels for that branch of medical care has been challenging.

MacDonald stated that the Cornelia Court Family Medical Centre has lost two family physicians over the past year – one re-locating to Ottawa, the other to Merrickville – but has added one doctor as well, bringing the site's physician count to six, although it could accommodate up to a dozen.

MacDonald is presently recruiting to possibly fill up to eight vacancies – one or two in hospitalist medicine, probably two for emergency medicine, a part-time psychiatrist, and two or three family doctors for Cornelia Court.

Councillor Dawn Quinn had a suggestion for helping alleviate the health professional shortage in town.

"I'm thinking…that maybe we need more nurse practitioners," she said.

"Maybe that's part of what we could do as a council, start to speak out for more funding, so that you could get nurse practitioners in here to take some of the load off… So the whole system could be better."

And while MacDonald didn't dismiss the idea, she stated that pursuing that strategy is not without its challenges.

"They're not paid by OHIP, so it requires a different funding source," she said.

Coun. Quinn replied that, "we could at least fight for that, ask questions," a comment with which MacDonald agreed.

Surpassing province in some areas

UCDSB students are making EQAO gains on tests

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN

Students in the Upper Canada District School Board continued to improve their performance on provincial assessments in 2025-26, with results climbing in every tested area and Grade 3 students exceeding Ontario averages in reading, writing and mathematics.

It marks the third consecutive year the UCDSB has reported gains on Education Quality and Accountability Office assessments for students in Grades 3, 6 and 9, as well as on the Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test.

The results measure the percentage of students who achieved the provincial standard of a Level 3 or at least a 70 per cent (75 per cent for OSSLT).

Grade 3 students recorded some of the strongest improvements. Mathematics results rose to 69 per cent from 61 per cent in 2024-25, while writing climbed from 64 to 71 per cent and reading increased from 71 to 77 per cent.

The gains are even more pronounced when compared with 2022-23. At that time, 46 per cent of Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in mathematics, 53 per cent in writing and 63 per cent in reading.

UCDSB says its 2025-26 Grade 3 results exceeded the provincial average in all three subjects.

"The results we are seeing from our students are directly connected to the support they are receiving in the classroom and at home," board chair Jamie Schoular said.

Schoular credited educators with implementing new teaching practices and providing additional classroom support while families have become increasingly involved in student learning.



Grade 6 students also continued their upward trend. Mathematics increased from 43 per cent to 47 per cent, writing from 83 to 85 per cent and reading from 83 to 84 per cent.

Since 2022-23, Grade 6 mathematics achievement has risen 14 percentage points, from 33 to 47 per cent. Writing has increased from 75 to 85 per cent over the same period, while reading moved from 78 to 84 per cent.

Grade 9 mathematics results reached 48 per cent in 2025-26, up from 45 per cent the previous year. The figure has climbed steadily from 34 per cent in 2022-23 and 40 per cent in 2023-24.

Results on the Grade 10 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test reached 81 per cent, compared with 80.8 per cent in 2024-25, 77.3 per cent in 2023-24 and 77.1 per cent in 2022-23.

UCDSB CEO Ron Ferguson said the board's emphasis remains on ensuring students are reading, writing and doing mathematics at grade level.

"Our focus has been clear: ensure students are reading, writing and doing math at grade level," Ferguson said. "We are encouraged to see this progress, but we recognize that there is still work to do."

The board says it has worked to more closely connect EQAO assessments with curriculum expectations and incorporate EQAO-style questions and practice into regular classroom instruction.

UCDSB plans to continue investing in evidence-based reading, writing and mathematics instruction, additional classroom resources and system-level supports aimed at improving student achievement.

Old Capitol Theatre building could get a minor makeover

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

The owners of one of Smiths Falls' most notable landmarks – the former Rideau (later Capitol) Theatre at 1 to 13 Chambers St. – are looking to give it a minor makeover.

According to a staff report prepared by the Town's Planning Clerk Marie Elmsley and presented during the September 22 Smiths Falls special Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) meeting, the Town recently received a Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP) application for the Heritage Conservation District-designated property to replace the exterior wooden stairs and wooden door at the back of the building on the water (Rideau River) side.

Elmsley added that the applicant "pre-consulted" with (Town) staff, MHC chairperson Dorothy Hudson and Councillor/MHC member Chris McGuire on August 13 "to review alterations to the property at the time," which included new windows and doors "to accommodate a change in use of the upper floor to residential."

Citing "ongoing vandalism in and around" the property, the owner "was also proposing to replace the exterior back staircase on the water side of the property and the basement door that they lead to, due to safety concerns."

In the interim, the applicant "has since decided not to pursue the alterations related to the change in use of the upper floor at this time," and re-submitted an application for the stairs and back door replacement.

"The stairs are not specifically mentioned in the HCD as an attribute, nor are they listed as an exemption from the Heritage Alteration permit process," added Elmsley, pointing out that the applicant "has since advised" that they will be replacing the wooden door at the bottom of the exterior staircase with a steel door.

According to Elmsley, "doors apart from storefronts and façade patterns, are not specifically listed in the attributes of the HCD," but under a section of the document pertaining to Heritage Permit exemptions, "alterations to rear façades that are not visible from the public realm of the HCD are exempt."

However, in the case of this property, the rear façade "is visible from Beckwith Street south of the intersection of Chambers (Street) and Beckwith and from across the water making it subject to Permit requirements."

The committee approved the application, which will be forwarded to Town council for final approval, but with the condition that it be amended to include a plan for moisture mitigation if the need arises.

There was concern from committee members that the installation of the new stairs – which currently calls for their attachment to the building using thru bolts – could potentially damage the building's masonry work and/or lead to significant water damage.

The flat-iron style building at 1 to 13 Chambers St. was designed by architect J.M. McLennan of Brockville and constructed in 1912 by local entrepreneur Bert Soper.

Originally opened as the 850-seat Rideau Theatre, it was later renamed the Capitol Theatre in 1929.

Featuring a stage (and later movie screen), an orchestra pit, and basement dressing rooms with baths, the theatre hosted live theatrical performances and motion pictures until it closed in 1949, after which the "new" Soper Theatre – which itself closed in 2012 and was demolished the following year – opened on Main Street West.

In the ensuing decades, the Chambers Street building has housed a number of commercial and retail tenants.

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Smiths Falls mayoral race

McKenna campaigns on experience, planning and our community-first

Coun. Peter McKenna is campaigning for mayor on a platform emphasizing community advocacy, collaborative leadership, long-term financial planning, infrastructure, recreation and economic development.

McKenna is one of three candidates seeking the mayor's chair in the Oct. 26 municipal election, along with Christopher G. Cummings and Nate Morris.

McKenna is currently a member of Smiths Falls council and has served for eight years. He was elected to council in 2018 with 1,727 votes and is now seeking the mayoralty vacated by long-serving Mayor Shawn Pankow.

"Smiths Falls has been home for most of my life, and my involvement in this community began long before I was elected to Council," McKenna said.

He points to an early experience with affordable housing as helping shape his approach to public service.

"At 15, I worked alongside our local social services director collecting signatures for deeply affordable housing," McKenna said. "That effort helped bring Empress Avenue social housing forward, and my family was among its first residents."

He said the experience taught him that municipal decisions can have a direct effect on residents' lives.

McKenna says his background includes more than 30 years in health and community services, along with experience managing employees and organizational budgets of up to $20 million.



AT THE LEFT: A supporter warmly greets Peter McKenna who is candidate for mayor.

His campaign sets out six broad priorities.

The first is advocating for Smiths Falls with Lanark County and the provincial and federal governments, including efforts to obtain funding and partnerships for affordable housing and health and social services.

McKenna says more than 800 housing units have been built during his eight years on council, including affordable and rent-geared-to-income housing, and he wants the town to continue supporting housing, child care and services for seniors and vulnerable residents.

His second theme is collaborative leadership.

"I believe the best leadership is collaborative leadership," McKenna says in his campaign material, adding that a mayor should work with council, municipal staff, residents, businesses and community organizations.

Financial management is another major plank. McKenna says he would emphasize responsible budgeting, long-range planning and strategic investment while continuing to pursue provincial and federal funding to reduce pressure on local taxpayers.

On recreation, he supports advancing the proposed Regional Recreation Facility and continued improvements to Lower Reach Park, trails, waterfront areas and other community spaces.

Infrastructure also features prominently in his platform. McKenna says roads, water and wastewater systems and public facilities need ongoing renewal, while growth should be balanced with protecting neighbourhoods, heritage, green space and the waterfront.

Economic development forms his sixth priority. He says he would work with the town's economic development department and business community on business retention, employment lands and investment, while supporting existing major employers and downtown businesses.

Health-care access is also a priority, McKenna said, citing his career in the sector and ongoing work with health-care and community partners.

"But Smiths Falls is more than budgets, buildings and infrastructure," he said. "Its beating heart is its people."

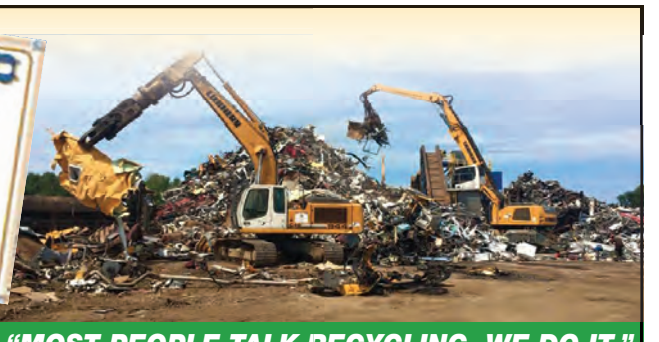
McKenna said his approach as mayor would be "experienced, steady and compassionate."

"My commitment is to listen carefully, work with people, plan ahead and keep building a Smiths Falls where people feel they belong," he said.

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In Smiths Falls mayoral bid

Cummings pitches experience, financial background as asset

Christopher Cummings is making experience and economic preparedness central to his bid to become the next mayor of Smiths Falls.

Cummings is one of three candidates seeking the mayor's chair in the Oct. 26 municipal election, alongside Peter McKenna and Nate Morris. Mayor Shawn Pankow is not seeking another term. Voting will be conducted by internet and telephone from Oct. 19 at 8:30 a.m. until Oct. 26 at 8 p.m.

Cummings served three consecutive terms on Smiths Falls council from 2006 to 2018 and spent his career in business banking and financial advising. He is also the current chair of the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario.

He says that background is particularly relevant as Smiths Falls faces economic uncertainty.

"I want to be Mayor because I care deeply about Smiths Falls," Cummings said. "I believe my experience can help our community deal with the economic problems we face today and prepare for the major challenges ahead."

Cummings points to the economic upheaval Smiths Falls experienced during his earlier years on council, when major employers including Hershey and Stanley Tools departed and the Rideau Regional Centre was closing.

He says the experience convinced him that economic recovery requires collaboration among government, business and community organizations.



CANDIDATE Christopher Cummings wants to be your next mayor.

"No one person turned the town around," Cummings said. "It took a lot of people pulling in the same direction."

His campaign is emphasizing support for existing businesses, attracting investment and controlling municipal spending. Cummings says he intends to visit every business in Smiths Falls and maintain regular contact with employers so the town can identify problems caused by tariffs, supply-chain disruptions or rising costs.

"We cannot control a trade war," he said. "We can support our existing businesses, attract new employers and reduce our dependence on any one company or industry."

Cummings has also taken a position on Ontario's Strong Mayor Powers, saying he would not use them to override council.

Smiths Falls was among 169 municipalities added to Ontario's Strong Mayor system effective May 1, 2025. The legislation gives mayors additional authority in areas including budgets, municipal organization and certain matters connected to provincial housing and infrastructure priorities.

Cummings argues those powers are unnecessary to settle disagreements in a municipality where the mayor and six councillors are all elected at large.

"If the seven people elected by the same community disagree, the Mayor should make a stronger case, provide better information, listen and try to find common ground," he said.

Cummings also says he believes Smiths Falls municipal drinking water is safe, based on regulated testing and professional oversight.

The town's 2025 drinking-water report lists no exceedances for the numerous inorganic and other regulated parameters reported, while the town has repeatedly stated its treated water meets provincial standards.

"People have a right to ask questions about their drinking water," Cummings said. "They also have a right to receive clear answers based on verified facts."

Cummings describes his candidacy as offering what he calls "change with experience."

"I live here. I believe in this town," he said. "I want to put that experience to work for the people of Smiths Falls."

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Our History

Thick quilts kept the pioneers warm and toasty at night



BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON

As autumn ushers in longer nights and cooler temperatures, many will turn up their central heating, keeping their home warm and cozy, while never giving it a second thought. For the early settlers to the region one of the simplest ways to stay warm through bone-chilling winter nights was thicker more substantial bedding, made by using items at hand, like a quilt.

Those early winters surely seemed long and severe to those newly arrived natives of Ireland and Scotland, in an era when imported textiles from Europe were expensive and scarce. As trade grew in the early 1800s, commercial cotton and printed calicos arrived at faraway ports like Montreal, transported to larger towns like Perth, Smiths Falls, and Carleton Place, but remained precious luxuries, unaffordable to most. Quilting in Lanark County began in those early times, out of necessity, a vital survival skill for pioneer families facing harsh winters.

The prohibitively high cost of fabrics meant every scrap in the pioneer home was put to use. Worn-out clothing was transformed into a set of curtains. Fur and skins from native wildlife, empty feed sacks, even old socks were all saved in remnant bags for future use. Any piece of cloth no longer in use was trimmed, shaped, and made into rags, towels, or diapers, and the tiniest scraps were saved in a quilting basket.

Quilting bees were a popular forum where women gathered at one home, and collectively produced a quilt. A wooden frame was assembled and the three sections of a quilt: the decorative top, the filling or batting, and the plain backing, were stitched together, as participants sat around the frame, working on their section. More than strictly a work-bee, they learned better stitching techniques and shared valuable information on child-rearing, gardening, cooking, and more. For isolated rural pioneer women, these bees were a welcoming place to connect with others in the community, exchange ideas, and share stories.

The most economical quilts in those early years were known as patch-work, constructed with a combination of geometric blocks, and became the go-to method for producing a thick cozy blanket with as little waste as possible. Other popular patterns were the Log Cabin, Nine Patch, and Star of Bethlehem. By the late 1800s, scrap quilts became popular, a tradition where no single fabric was repeated, and scraps of fabric were traded with neighbours to achieve the greatest variety of colours. As the pioneer settlements grew, more elaborate patterns were influenced by the Canadian landscape, featuring tree, leaf and flower motifs. These particular quilts reflected a growing connection to the environment, and many contained symbols illustrating memories of journeys to Lanark County and early settlement.

Before commercial dyes became available in the 1860s pioneer women often used natural plant dyes to colour their fabrics. Goldenrod flowers produced strong clear yellows, and marigold heads yielded fiery shades of orange. Red and blue dyes were more difficult to source as the raw plant juice from berries required chemical additives to hold fast, and Indigo packets were available at some early general stores, but were expensive. By the mid 1800s, more colourful fabrics, as well as commercial dyes, were sold throughout the region, eventually eliminating the need for plant dyes.

Quilting began to decline across much of Canada by the late 1880s as steam-driven sewing machines grew in popularity, and many textiles were mass-produced in factories. This boom in technology meant faster production of cheaper bedding eliminating the need for hand-sewing, which required many hours of time in busy households with large families.

Today, quilting is experiencing a revival, not due to necessity as it was in pioneer times, but as a heritage craft with historic expertise to be preserved and shared with future generations. Born as an essential skill for the survival of early settlers, the legacy of those pioneer quilts are their unique window into a community's history, preserving memories through the fabrics of their daily lives.

* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

Watch out for warning signs before a stroke

While strokes often seem to happen out of the blue, there are often subtle warning signs beforehand.

Don't ignore them, especially if you have risk factors for stroke such as high blood pressure, diabetes, high LDL cholesterol and heart disease. Headaches that are more intense or frequent than normal may signal a problem with blood flow to the brain.

Feeling dizzy or having trouble maintaining balance could also be a sign of compromised blood supply to the brain.

If you feel like you're dragging a leg or having trouble coordinating your steps, this can be an early neurological warning. Sudden changes in vision, such as seeing double or blurry images, can be a subtle early warning sign.

Loss of vision in one eye or trouble hearing on one side could be caused by temporary blockages in the arteries leading to the brain

A tingling sensation or weakness in the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body, is a classic sign of a of a transient ischemic attack (TIA), also known as a mini stroke.

If you suddenly find it hard to speak clearly, find the right words, or understand what others are saying, it can be signs of a TIA. Unexplained episodes of confusion, difficulty concentrating, or memory lapses may indicate that certain brain functions are being temporarily affected.

Reduced blood flow can lead to a general sense of weakness or fatigue well before more severe symptoms appear. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, get medical attention as soon as possible.



Dangerous muscle pain will need quick attention

Some muscle pains are not normal and could be a medical emergency

Usually, when your muscle hurts after exercise, it's just from working out too hard.

The pain is normal and goes away after a while. However, some types of muscle pain are not normal and could be a medical emergency.

You should get help right away if your muscle pain feels like a "burning pain" (like something hot is inside your leg or arm) or a "deep ache" that feels very intense and goes deep into the muscle. It's a major red flag if this pain gets much worse when you try to move the sore body part. If you have these symptoms, it could be a serious problem called Compartment Syndrome.

The strong, thin layer of tissue which holds your muscles is called fascia. A compartment is one of these tight bundles of muscle, blood vessels, and nerves.

Compartment syndrome happens when something causes a lot of swelling or bleeding inside that bundle. Because the fascia around the muscle doesn't stretch easily, the pressure inside the compartment goes up very fast.

Pressure

This high pressure squeezes the blood vessels and nerves, stopping blood from flowing properly. When blood can't get in to bring oxygen or out to remove waste, the muscle tissue starts to die. That's what causes the severe pain.

This is an emergency, and doctors must act right away. A surgeon makes a long cut through the tough skin (the muscle cover) that is squeezing the muscle. Afterward, you'll need pain medication, and sometimes a skin graft (taking skin from another part of your body) to cover the large wound.

You will also need physiotherapy to help the muscle get back its full movement and strength. A physical therapist will teach you special stretches and strengthening moves.

Do you SNORE in your sleep?

Most of us do!

Snoring is a common phenomenon that usually becomes more frequent with age.

Forty percent of Canadians snore regularly; 20% of men and 10% of women snore so loudly they can be heard through a closed door. Snores of 100 decibels have been recorded, as loud as a helicopter or rock concert.

Snoring occurs when air flows past relaxed tissues in your throat, causing the tissues to vibrate as you breathe.

It can be a nuisance to your partner; sometimes it may also indicate a serious health condition. Snoring can be caused by several factors, such as the anatomy of your mouth and sinuses, alcohol consumption, nasal congestion due to allergies or a cold, and being overweight.

Lifestyle changes, such as losing weight, avoiding alcohol close to bedtime or sleeping on your side, can help stop snoring.

However, snoring is often associated with a sleep disorder called obstructive sleep apnea (OSA).

Symptoms include witnessed breathing pauses during sleep, excessive daytime sleepiness, difficulty concentrating, sore throat upon awakening, restless sleep and gasping or choking at night. People with obstructive sleep apnea usually experience periods when breathing slows or stops at least five times during every hour of sleep.

See your doctor if you have any of the above symptoms. Your doctor may want to conduct a sleep study, at home or overnight at a sleep center.

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Soft Close: Tuesday, October 13th, 5:00pm

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Entertainment & Events

October is bringing a busy mix of theatre, live music, markets, ghostly attractions and family Halloween events to Smiths Falls, giving residents plenty of reasons to get out after Thanksgiving.

The spooky season begins Thursday, Oct. 8, with Ghost Tours at the Heritage House Museum, 11 Old Slys Rd. Costumed interpreters will guide visitors through the candlelit 1860s home while sharing local ghost stories, oral traditions and mysterious tales connected to Smiths Falls. The historic surroundings should add plenty of atmosphere for anyone who likes a little local history with their Halloween chills.

* * *

Thanksgiving weekend shoppers can head to Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95, 7 Main St. E., Saturday, Oct. 10, for the Thanksgiving Craft and Artisan Market. The event runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and features handmade goods, fall-themed crafts, gifts and seasonal finds. It is also a chance to support local makers while getting an early start on fall and holiday shopping.

* * *

Movie lovers can visit the Station Theatre, 53 Victoria Ave., Thursday, Oct. 15, for Film Night International, with screenings scheduled for 2 and 7 p.m. The series continues to bring international and independent films to local audiences in a traditional theatre setting.

* * *

The Station Theatre stays busy later in the month when Agatha Christie's The Hollow opens Oct. 16. The murder mystery centres on a gathering at a country house that turns deadly after Dr. Cristow is shot, leaving a room full of suspects and plenty of motives to sort through. Performances continue through Oct. 25, making it a fitting theatrical choice for the Halloween season.

* * *

Heritage House Museum also gets considerably darker with Haunted Heritage House on Oct. 16, 17, 23 and 24. The nighttime attraction gives visitors a more chilling look at the historic property, with the museum transformed for a Halloween experience. Those who enjoy haunted-house attractions may want to book early, as seasonal events at the museum have traditionally proved popular.

* * *

For something more musical, Mary's Merry Minstrels performs Sunday, Oct. 18, at Trinity United Church, 41 Market St. N. The 2:30 p.m. concert will feature old-time country, gospel, fiddling and traditional favourites, offering a gentler change of pace from the month's ghosts and murder mysteries.

* * *

Saturday, Oct. 24, may be the busiest entertainment day of the month.

Downtown Smiths Falls gets a double dose of Halloween fun beginning with Skele-Bration from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The family-friendly event welcomes young ghouls and their grown-ups for seasonal activities in the downtown core.

At 3 p.m., singer-songwriter Craig Cardiff performs at Bowie's, 20 Russell St. E. A Juno and Canadian Folk Music Award-nominated artist, Cardiff is known for his storytelling, intimate performances and warm connection with audiences. Tickets are $20.

The atmosphere turns more mysterious that evening when the Mystic Market runs from 5 to 9 p.m. Visitors can browse local vendors, meet mystics and witches, and explore an assortment of unusual and intriguing treasures. Combined with Skele-Bration earlier in the day, the market makes Oct. 24 a full day of Halloween-themed activity downtown.

* * *

Halloween fun continues Sunday, Oct. 25, at Kinsmen Hall with a Halloween Tea featuring medium Christine Rogerson from 3 to 5 p.m. The afternoon includes treats and specialty drinks followed by a group medium experience. Tickets are $45 per person — because apparently even the spirits enjoy a proper tea service.

* * *

The month closes with the Christmas Kickoff Weekend craft and artisan market Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 at Legion Branch 95, running from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days. The event gives shoppers another opportunity to browse locally made gifts and get an early start on Christmas preparations.

* * *

Smiths Falls Civitan Sunday afternoon bingo also returns Nov. 1. Held on the first Sunday of each month, doors open at 11 a.m., with play beginning at 1 p.m.

Event dates and details can change; readers should check with organizers before attending.

You can reach Smiths Falls with your newspaper

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Obituaries

DUNLOP
Dorothy Alberta (née Sharpe)

DEC. 2, 1923 – SEPT. 30, 2026

Predeceased by sisters Marion (Laurie), Evelyn (Bill) and brother William (Mildred) and her parents Charles and Mina (Bailey) Sharpe.

Dorothy (Dot) was born in Fredericton, New Brunswick and married James Fulton Dunlop from Woodstock, Ontario. Jim was attending University of New Brunswick at the time. While they lived in Frederickton, Dot worked at Herbie's Music Store and Royal Bank. Jim worked as an engineer and teacher at General Electric in Hamilton, Huntsville and Renfrew. He then joined the Federal Government as an engineer. The rest of their lives they lived in Bells Corners and built a lovely home in Carleton Place. For almost 50 years, Dot volunteered weekly at the Friendship Club at Bells Corners United Church in 1969 and at Mills Community Centre (specifically music and memories).

Through their lives they enjoyed travelling in Canada, U.S. and Europe (with a special passion for the British Isles).

Jim had a stroke, lived in long-term care in Almonte where Dot got an apartment. Jim died on February 1, 2016, and Dot moved into assisted living in Ottawa and then in a nursing home in Beaverton, Ontario where she died.

Barker Funeral Home & Chapel

Barker Funeral Home
19 McArthur Avenue
Carleton Place
613-257-3113
barkerfh.com



CRAMPTON
Raymond "Ray" Irwin Daniel



Peacefully on Saturday, October 3, 2026, at the age of 80.

Father of Robert Crampton (Jennifer Smith), Rayanne Harback (Mike), Scott Crampton, Kayla Crampton (Jeff Laberge). Brother of the late Valerie Garrett (Hal), Mark Crampton (Kelly) and Jack Ford (Sharon, late), and the late Darryl Crampton (Debbie, late). He was a grandfather to six amazing grandchildren, and an uncle to wonderful nieces and nephews.

Ray was a very proud and outspoken New York Rangers fan, a coach, and an athlete. Hockey, baseball, football, basketball, wrestling, tennis, volleyball, track and field, downhill, cross-country and water skiing, and he did it all well. He was a proud cadet Lt. Colonel, as a kid, and a proud corporal in the militia as a young adult before joining Bell and then the Bank of Montreal becoming one of the youngest branch managers in the country; and eventually starting his own business as a mortgage broker where he helped so many people realize their dream of owning a home.

He spent many wonderful summers at the trailer on Mississippi Lake at McCreary's Beach playing cards, laughing with neighbours and enjoying campfires and he loved spending time with his cousins. Later in life he travelled the world on cruises, adventures with friends, and road trips where his children were treated to hours and hours and hours of 50's and 60's hits.

Ray's goal was always to do the best with what he had – and he did.

Family and friends may pay their respects at the Barker Funeral Home, 19 McArthur Avenue, Carleton Place, on Wednesday, October 7th from 2pm to 4pm; and 6pm to 8pm. A funeral service will be held in the Barker Funeral Home chapel on Thursday, October 8th at 11am.

In Memoriam donations to the Alzheimer Society of Lanark Leeds Grenville are appreciated.

Barker Funeral Home
19 McArthur Avenue
Carleton Place
613-257-3113
barkerfh.com

VAUGHAN
Margaret "Ann"

JULY 13, 1940 – SEPTEMBER 29, 2026



Ann passed away peacefully at the Perth Hospital, surrounded by the love of her family, on Tuesday, September 29, 2026, in her 87th year.

Ann was the beloved wife of Doug Vaughan and cherished mother of Judy (Don) Meraw of Perth and Sandy (Floyd) Thomas, also of Perth. She was the proud grandmother of Dan (Victoria) Thomson, Jamie (Greg) Spencer, Steven Meraw, Matthew Thomas and Melissa (Stephanie) Thomas, and a loving great-grandmother to Preston (Mable), Eden and Henry Spencer, and Ravi Thomas.

She was predeceased by her parents, Albert and Bridget Carroll; her sister, Mary (late Bill) Fitzgerald; and her brothers, Francis, Ken, Pat and Joe Carroll.

Ann will be sadly missed by her many nieces and nephews, as well as her dear "Tim Hortons sister," Dorothy "Dee Dee" Freestone.

Above all, Ann cherished her family and had a great love for animals. In her younger years, she and Doug enjoyed travelling with friends, whether soaking up the sun or skiing the hills of Whistler. These adventures, along with the time spent surrounded by those she loved, created many treasured memories throughout her life.

Friends were invited to visit with the family at the Blair & Son Funeral Home, 15 Gore St. W., Perth on Monday, October 5, 2026 from 4:00PM - 7:00PM. Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. John's Roman Catholic Church on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, at 11:00 a.m with interment immediately following at St. John's Cemetery, Perth. A reception was held at the Blair & Son Funeral Home where all joined in their support for the family and gathered together in memory of Ann.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Ann's memory to the Lanark Animal Welfare Society (LAWS) would be greatly appreciated by her family.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com

Obituaries

MacPHAIL
Norma Margaret (née Cullen)

NOV. 6, 1939 – SEPT. 30, 2026



It is with profound sadness that the family of Norma Margaret MacPhail (née Cullen), of Perth, Ontario, announces her peaceful passing on Wednesday, September 30, 2026.

Norma was the beloved wife and lifelong companion of Malcolm "Mac" MacPhail. She was the devoted and loving mother of Kenneth MacPhail (Susanne Klausen) and Carrie (Charlie) Millar, and a proud and cherished grandmother to Kayla Millar, Brenna MacPhail (Jack Beaumont), Aundrea (Jon) Gifford, Aislin MacPhail (Chris Lynch), and Corbin (Julia) Millar. She was the treasured great-grandmother of Keaton and Blakely Gifford and the loving step-great-grandmother of Logan and Lucas Lynch.

Predeceased by her parents, Kenneth and Helen Cullen, Norma was also predeceased by her siblings Cherie (late Percy) Beaupre, Bob (late Illa) Cullen, Helene Lamb, Gerry (Gert) Cullen, Terry Cullen, Brent Cullen, Audrey (late Wayne) Bissonette, and Beverly (Renny) Burchill. She is survived by her sister, Kaye Malone.

Norma will be fondly remembered by her many nieces, nephews, extended family members, and dear friends. She held a special place in her heart for Steve (Stacia) Carruthers and Andy (Cyndie) Carruthers and their families.

Norma had an extraordinary gift for nurturing houseplants. Her love of gardening and her caring touch transformed her home into an oasis of greenery and vibrant colour. Those who knew Norma will also remember her for her kindness, generosity, and unwavering devotion to her family. She possessed a remarkable ability to bring people together and was truly the heart of her family. Her home reflected the love she had for those closest to her, filled with photographs, keepsakes, and treasured mementos celebrating the lives and accomplishments of her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and many others.

Family gatherings were among Norma's greatest joys. Holidays were especially meaningful occasions, marked by beautiful decorations, her lovingly prepared meals, and the warmth of being surrounded by loved ones. She was especially known for the care and effort she put into decorating for Halloween. Neighbourhood children came from far and wide to enjoy the festive displays and the generous treats she delighted in giving out. Through her efforts, she created traditions and memories that will be cherished by her family for generations to come.

Though her presence will be deeply missed, the love and countless memories she leaves behind will remain in the hearts of all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Family and friends are invited to attend a Celebration of Life to honour Norma's memory at the home of Carrie and Charlie Millar on Saturday, October 17, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Please call or text 613-200-3580 for additional information or directions.

In honour of her, memorial contributions to Tree Canada would be greatly appreciated.

The family extends its sincere gratitude to all those who offered care, support, and friendship to Norma throughout her life.

Forever loved,
forever remembered.

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Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com

CARDINAL
Gerald James "Jerry"

DECEMBER 26, 1944 – SEPTEMBER 29, 2026



Peacefully, surrounded by the love of his family, Gerald James Cardinal passed away on September 29, 2026, at the age of 81.

Gerald James Cardinal, lovingly known as Jerry, was born in Perth, Ontario, on December 26, 1944. Jerry was a familiar and much-loved presence in the lives of his family and friends, and over the years he gave them countless stories, laughs, and memories to hold onto.

Jerry was predeceased by his beloved wife, Evelyn Cardinal; his parents, Gerald and Audrey Cardinal; his sisters, Joan Shanks and Gail Goodbody; his sister-in-law, Marie Cardinal; and his dear friend, Eileen Burke.

Jerry will be sadly missed by his siblings Judy Laurin (Terry), Billy Cardinal (Bev), Ronnie Cardinal, and Beverly Cardinal.

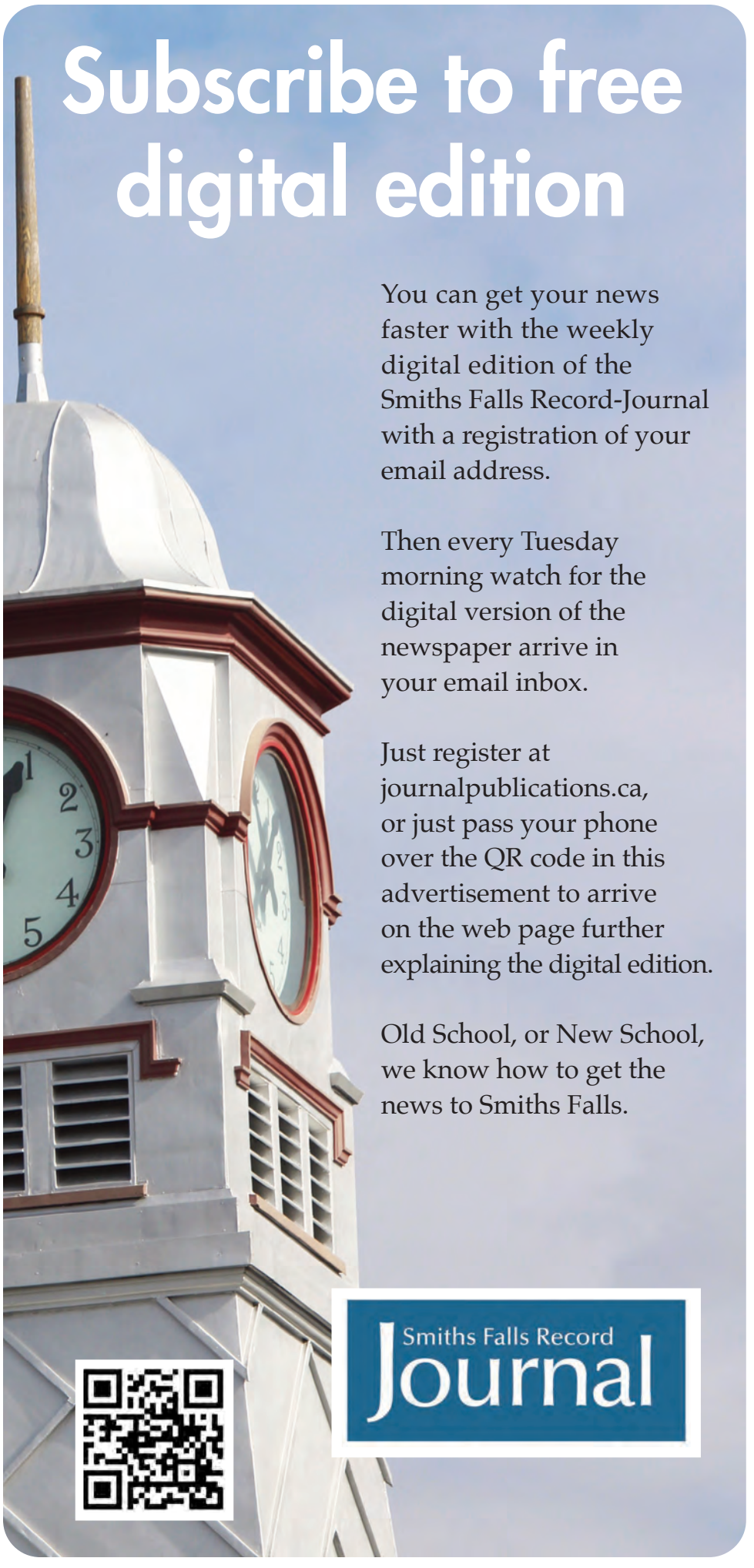
Much-loved Uncle Jerry to Chris (Alyson), Kori, Kelly (Jim), Julie, Terry-John, Tara (Jody), Tyler (Joanna), and Melissa, and a cherished great-uncle to Kieran, Jaden, Emma, Addison, Jamie, Jessica, Molly, Matt, Taylor, Brady, Quinn, and Rylan.

Gerald also shared a very special bond with his beloved cat, Mikey, who was much more than a pet, Mikey was his best friend and faithful companion.

Friends were invited to visit with the family at the Blair & Son Funeral Home, 15 Gore St. W., Perth on Monday, October 5, 2026 from 10:00am until the time of his funeral service in the chapel at 11:00am. Interment immediately followed the chapel service at Elmwood Cemetery, Perth.

Those wishing to honour Jerry with a memorial donation are asked to consider the Lanark Animal Welfare Society (LAWS) or Diabetes Canada.

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News of our Neighbours

Merrickville-Wolford council has approved heritage and zoning

Merrickville-Wolford council dealt with a mix of heritage, planning and community matters at its Sept. 28 meeting.

Council approved a heritage building window upgrade at 111 Main St. E., along with a zoning amendment involving the Ogilvie property and a development agreement connected with consent file B-97-24. Council also adopted an updated site plan control bylaw. Merrickville Wolford

Among other business, council approved a new Merrickville Community Centre banner policy, which will guide requests to display banners at the facility. Councillors also endorsed a resolution calling for a province-wide regulatory framework governing e-scooters.

The municipality received departmental updates from the clerk and CAO/finance departments and heard a delegation concerning the history and ownership of Merrickville's directional arrow system.

Rideau Lakes could remove a house's heritage status

A historic Portland-area home could lose its municipal heritage designation following an application from the property owner.

The Township of Rideau Lakes says council has received a request to repeal the heritage designation covering 2777 Highway 15 in Portland. The two-storey frame house was constructed in 1892 by local lumberman Harmon Toffey and is noted for its Italianate architectural features. Rideau Lakes

Heritage attributes identified by the township include paired brackets beneath the eaves, original window trim, decorative details above the main entrance and an elaborate porch with detailed posts and railings.

The property was designated under a 1984 bylaw. The current application asks council to repeal that bylaw entirely, which would remove the property's heritage status.

The matter is scheduled to come before Rideau Lakes council at a regular meeting in October.

Montague has a new online burn permit system

Residents planning outdoor burning in Montague Township now have a new way to obtain the required permit.

The township has moved its burn permit system online through BurnPermits.com, allowing residents to create an account and manage permits electronically. The change is among the latest municipal updates posted by Montague as the fall burning season gets underway. montaguetownship.ca

The township currently reports that no burn ban is in effect, although residents remain responsible for following local burning regulations and any restrictions that may be imposed as conditions change.

Montague has also been reviewing a number of infrastructure and planning issues this year. Earlier discussions included a gravel road optimization strategy and a draft road-upgrade policy, with the municipality seeking public feedback on how road work should be prioritized. montaguetownship.ca

Upcoming regular council meetings are scheduled for Oct. 6 and Oct. 20, followed by another meeting Nov. 3. Committee of the Whole meetings are scheduled for the same evenings.

Museum reviews Indigenous collection

As museums world-wide are doing, the Perth Museum is reviewing Indigenous belongings in its collection as part of work that could lead to some items being returned to their communities of origin.

Museum staff have been researching how the belongings entered the collection, identifying possible communities of origin and improving storage and conservation practices.

Items previously on display have been removed while the review continues. The museum is also developing a repatriation policy to guide future decisions.

The first phase of the project was supported through the federal Museum Assistance Program.

Renovictions bylaw is in the works at council

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Work on the proposed Smiths Falls renovictions bylaw is progressing, members of the town's Equity For All Committee heard during their most recent meeting on September 10.

"We sent a motion to council (at the March 9 committee of the whole meeting) that they consider a renovictions-type bylaw," said Mayor Shawn Pankow, a member of the committee.

"Council/committee of the whole supported that direction and turned it over to (the Town's Manager of Development Services) Karl (Grenke) and his department (including Mallory McNeely, the Town's Development Services Coordinator) to come up with a proposed bylaw."

McNeely provided an update on that work, beginning with a refresher on the issue that the proposed ordinance addresses.

"Renoviction is the displacement of a tenant after being given an N13 notice, which is issued by the landlord for the reason of renovations or repairs (meaning the tenant must vacate the premises)," she explained.

"And while this process can be legitimate, in the past few years it's been used by some landlords…to essentially remove the (the long-standing) tenant after doing no renovations, and bumping their rent up to market value," which they can't afford.

During the March 9 C.O.W. session, the mayor pointed out that tenants often don't understand that an N13 is not an eviction notice and feel they have no recourse but to move, although provincial regulations require a landlord to issue proper notice and seek approval for evictions through the Landlord and Tenant Board.

"Over my last two terms as mayor, I've met dozens of people who have received an N13…And in some cases, the landlord has aggressively pressured the tenants to move out," he said.

45% rent in town

According to Mayor Pankow, about 45 percent of the town's citizens rent their place of dwelling, and many of those tenants are of lower income and have spent years in that home, meaning their rent is well below market value.

Under the proposed Smiths Falls bylaw, landlords would be required to apply for a licence from the Town to prove the renovation work is actually required and will occur, and that the unit needs to be vacated by the tenant(s) while those renovations/repairs are being made.

It would also stipulate that the landlord would need to provide temporary accommodations for the tenant(s) during the renovation period.

Hamilton, London, and Ottawa are among the Ontario municipalities to have passed renovictions bylaws.

The City of Hamilton's Renovation Licence and Relocation Bylaw charges an initial $715 application fee per unit and a $125 annual renewal fee if the renovation work extends past one year, while the licensing fee for the City of London's renoviction by-law is $600 per unit.

The City of Ottawa's Rental Renovation Licence Bylaw – approved this past July and which comes into effect on Jan. 1, 2027 – does not currently charge landlords a licensing fee.

"If the same approach is adopted in Smiths Falls, it will require landlords to issue the N13 notice…apply for a licence with the Town, which requires a list of documents to be provided to the Town to prove that vacancy by the tenant is required, that these renovations are legitimate, and that the notice was given lawfully," stated McNeely.

Town staff will return to council at a later date with three options: the proposed ordinance as it's been presented; a version that would focus on educating tenants of their rights under the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA); and a "scaled back" bylaw with amendments, which, according to McNeely, "wouldn't go beyond" the RTA.

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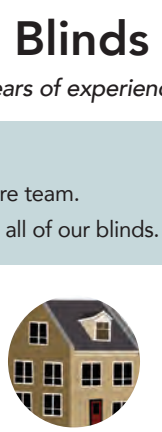
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Council approves upgrade heritage grant for building – Page 18

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Smiths Falls Record
Journal

Candidates offer their visions for future of town

PAGE 2-3-10-11

Smiths Falls to advise tenants on their rights
PAGE 9

From haunted heritage tours and live concerts to downtown Halloween celebrations and seasonal markets, Smiths Falls residents have plenty of entertainment choices. See page 15

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Three mayoral candidates offer contrasting visions for town at packed election meeting



PHOTO: Jacqueline Marie

At the Rotary Club's candidates meeting on Sept. 30, left to right: Peter McKenna, Nate Morris, and Chris Cummings.

Three candidates competing to become the next mayor of Smiths Falls presented sharply different approaches to municipal spending, recreation, policing and economic development during a packed all-candidates meeting hosted by the Rotary Club of Smiths Falls.

Peter McKenna, Nate Morris and Christopher Cummings addressed a standing-room-only audience in the Lancaster Room at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95 on Sept. 30.

The meeting, moderated by Rotarian Doug Robbins, featured prepared questions and written submissions from residents covering a proposed $50-million recreation complex, drinking water, physician recruitment, ALTO high-speed rail and downtown heritage protection.

Peter McKenna emphasizes his experience and stability

McKenna, a current town councillor with more than 30 years of experience in health care and community services, presented himself as a candidate offering continuity, practical leadership and responsible growth.

He emphasized the importance of protecting investments already made in Smiths Falls while ensuring future projects remain financially manageable.

On the proposed $50-million recreation complex, McKenna stressed that the project would be more than an arena, potentially accommodating indoor soccer, basketball, pickleball and other recreational activities.

However, he acknowledged Smiths Falls could not afford such a development independently. The project would require financial participation from neighbouring municipalities and senior levels of government.

McKenna strongly defended maintaining the Smiths Falls Police Service, arguing that changing to the Ontario Provincial Police could divide the community.

He also supported the town's recently established downtown Heritage Conservation District, saying it would help protect historic architecture. He pointed to municipal financial incentives available to property owners undertaking building improvements.

On physician recruitment, McKenna drew on his extensive health-care experience. He favoured strengthening existing recruitment partnerships rather than offering exceptionally large financial incentives to attract doctors.

McKenna also defended the safety of the municipal drinking water supply, criticizing what he considered unfounded allegations surrounding water quality.

Regarding ALTO high-speed rail, he argued council should remain engaged with the federal government because Smiths Falls could potentially benefit from a station or maintenance facility.

His central campaign message was that Smiths Falls needs experienced leadership capable of protecting recent progress without taking unnecessary financial risks.

Nate Morris campaigns on accountability and change

Morris, a first-time municipal candidate, presented the clearest challenge to the direction of the outgoing council, emphasizing lower household costs, financial accountability and greater transparency at town hall.

He questioned whether Smiths Falls could realistically undertake the proposed $50-million recreation complex, particularly given uncertainty about securing contributions from neighbouring municipalities.

Morris argued that controlling municipal spending and addressing affordability should take precedence over costly ambitions that could increase pressure on taxpayers.

He has made water affordability and accountability over environmental testing central campaign issues.

During the meeting, Morris defended his concerns about water quality and the handling of environmental information after McKenna accused critics of unnecessarily alarming residents.

Morris maintained that his questions were supported by evidence and deserved substantive answers from municipal officials.

On policing, Morris said he favours retaining a local police service but wants stronger civilian oversight, better financial controls and measures such as body-worn cameras. He remains willing to examine whether OPP policing might offer financial advantages.

Morris was firmly opposed to the ALTO high-speed rail proposal, distinguishing himself from candidates who see possible economic opportunities arising from the project.

He also advocated stronger financial incentives to attract phy-[sicians, arguing that Smiths Falls must compete with other communities offering recruitment packages.

On accessibility, Morris suggested exploring a weekly transportation shuttle for seniors and people with mobility limitations.

His campaign also emphasizes affordable housing, improvements to municipal permitting, fair bylaw enforcement and greater responsiveness to public concerns.

Morris told voters he would make the mayoralty his full-time priority and argued that local government must be willing to accept criticism and reconsider decisions when presented with new evidence.

Cummings offers experience with a willingness to change

Cummings, who previously served 12 years on Smiths Falls council from 2006 to 2018, presented his campaign as a combination of municipal experience, financial knowledge and a willingness to pursue improvements.

His background includes banking, financial services, municipal economic development and education governance.

Cummings acknowledged the potential benefits of a new regional recreation complex but questioned whether the municipality could realistically finance a $50-million project.

He suggested such a facility could improve physical and mental health, serve residents of different ages and generate economic activity. However, he said the project could not proceed responsibly without firm financial commitments.

On policing, Cummings was among the strongest defenders of maintaining the Smiths Falls Police Service.

Drawing on his previous service on the police services board, he said conversations with representatives of OPP-policed municipalities reinforced his belief in the value of retaining local policing.

Cummings also expressed confidence in the safety of Smiths Falls drinking water and the employees operating the municipal treatment plant.

Regarding ALTO high-speed rail, he acknowledged potential problems involving land acquisition, neighbouring municipalities and existing passenger rail service.

Nevertheless, he was unwilling to dismiss possible economic benefits, particularly if Smiths Falls could attract a rail maintenance facility.

Physicians recruitment

On physician recruitment, Cummings recalled his involvement in establishing an earlier recruitment task force. He also acknowledged McKenna's healthcare experience, indicating he would seek his assistance if elected.

Cummings supported the downtown Heritage Conservation District but cautioned against imposing excessive restrictions that could discourage property owners from renovating or investing in buildings.

He also addressed accessibility, saying the municipality should identify barriers and work with community agencies to improve conditions for residents with disabilities.

Cummings, who is retired, confirmed he would serve as a full-time mayor.

His central argument was that voters do not have to choose between preserving everything the current council has accomplished and demanding sweeping changes.

* * *

Voters face important decisions.

Although all three candidates recognized the challenges facing Smiths Falls, their approaches differed substantially.



Veterans banners honour local heroes in Smiths Falls

Downtown Smiths Falls is honouring local veterans through the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95's annual Veteran Banner Program.

In recent days Town public works has raised the banners on lamp posts.

The commemorative banners, displayed on downtown lampposts leading up to Remembrance Day, feature photographs, names and military service details of local veterans.

Organized in partnership with the Town of Smiths Falls and Downtown Business Association, the initiative recognizes those who served Canada, including veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice.

The banners provide residents and visitors with an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices made by military personnel and their families while preserving their stories for future generations

Fifteen council candidates make their pitch – Page 10

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

Emergency

Lanark County residents encouraged to join Great ShakeOut earthquake drill



A TEACHER instructs her young students on what to do when earthquakes happen.

DROP, COVER AND HOLD ON

Residents, schools, businesses and community organizations across Lanark County are being encouraged to take part in the Great ShakeOut earthquake drill on Thursday, Oct. 15, at 10:15 a.m.

The Great ShakeOut is an international earthquake preparedness exercise designed to teach people how to protect themselves when the ground begins to shake.

At 10:15 a.m., participants are asked to practise the simple safety message: Drop, Cover and Hold On.

That means dropping to the ground, taking cover under a sturdy desk or table if possible, and holding on until the shaking stops. Organizers recommend remaining in position for at least 60 seconds during the drill.

The exercise is held each year on International ShakeOut Day, which falls on the third Thursday of October. In 2026, the date is Oct. 15. People can participate at home, in the workplace, at school or wherever they happen to be.

While earthquakes are more commonly associated with places such as British Columbia or California, eastern Ontario is not earthquake-free. The purpose of the drill is to make the correct response automatic before a real emergency occurs.

The ShakeOut is also an opportunity for families and organizations to review emergency plans, check supplies and identify objects such as bookcases, televisions or heavy furniture that could fall during strong shaking.

Organizers say even a one-minute drill can help people understand what to do immediately during an earthquake and encourage broader emergency preparedness.

For Lanark County residents, the message at 10:15 a.m. Oct. 15 is simple: drop, cover and hold on.

Lanark County takes over K&P Trail as management plans take shape

Lanark County has officially assumed responsibility for managing and maintaining the K&P Trail within its boundaries, marking a new chapter for the popular recreational corridor.

The transfer took effect Tuesday, October 13, at 5 p.m., placing responsibility for trail maintenance, management and safety under county administration.

County council and staff are continuing work on a comprehensive Trail Management Plan and Trails Use Bylaw that will establish future maintenance priorities, improvements and regulations governing trail activities.

The proposed regulations will address permitted vehicles, recreational activities and expectations for users to ensure the trail remains safe and accessible.

County officials emphasize there are no immediate changes to how the trail may be used.

Until the management plan and bylaw receive council approval, existing trail activities can continue.

In the meantime, Lanark County will install signs identifying county ownership and outlining suggested rules to encourage responsible trail use.

Details of any future restrictions or operational changes will be communicated following approval by county council.

Residents encountering trail maintenance problems or safety hazards are encouraged to contact Lanark County at 613-267-1353 or roads@lanarkcounty.ca.

Use of GPS is off the charts: Would we be lost without them?

3-minutes with
Peter Black
Columnist



A few years ago, deciding to give newfangled technology a go, we borrowed our neighbours GPS gizmo to drive a long, long stretch of highway that I could have driven in my sleep or with my hands tied behind my back, not that I have actually done either.

After endless kilometres of silence, Ms. GPS excitedly sparked to life, and in a tone reminiscent of one's sternest of grade school teachers, commanded us to "turn here, turn here." Had we obeyed the satellite's earthly robotic servant, we would have turned on to a gravel road to what would be accurately described as nowhere and quite possibly our doom and headlines at the top of the news..

Later that same year, in the depths of winter, a young doctor from Sherbrooke, similarly equipped with a GPS for a trip to New Brunswick, confidently followed the device's directions and ended up stranded in the snow on a logging road in the wilds of the Miramachi, 100 km off course. She survived for three days on a cooler of food her mother had packed before being happened upon by snowmobilers.

The moral of these aborted tragedies, according to GPS apologists, is, tut tut, you didn't read the manual. If you HAD, you'd have learned that you have to change the machine's settings to ignore unpaved roads. So, where's that manual again?

To be fair, your scribe recently successfully availed himself of the services of a cell phone GPS app to navigate a confusing network of connections heading for a destination in the remote reaches of Charlesbourg. Ignoring Ms. GPS's often comical phonetic interpretation of French street names – "turn left on Boulevard Reen Leave-ess-cue" – one must admit the thing has its advantages.

GPS has become an essential tool for ordinary folks and is now almost a standard feature for cars and trucks. It's a massive industry, with $155 billion US in global revenues in 2020, still growing strong despite the pandemic, and estimated to grow to $227 billion US by 2027.

Of course, the price of finding one's way efficiently is a disturbing invasion of privacy, just like anything associated with the internet. A tiny example of the pervasiveness of this fearful data collection is the cheery little records of your monthly travels Google Maps sends you. Look where you've been and where We have been following you!

With the invasion of GPS we are losing our cherished dependence on maps. We have a collection of maps in a box somewhere from places we've been over the years. Some places may have changed so much to have rendered the maps useless, but still they are fond souvenirs of cities we've visited and spent hours trying to figure out where we were and how to find our car.

The GPS, naturally, has driven map sales off a cliff. According to several reports the market for paper road maps has dropped by more than a half in the last decade, but appears to have stabilized. Canada's largest map publisher, with the distinctive yellow branding, is MapArt, based in Oshawa; in Quebec, it distributes maps under the JDMGeo brand.

The company has adapted to the GPS invasion by producing "GPS compatible maps" - whatever that means, plus a range of specialty maps like the one they created last year where fans of Ontario provincial parks can scratch off the ones they've visited to reveal a colourful map underneath.

The decline of roadmaps due to the domination of GPS is having another impact in line with the countless other nefarious effects of smartphones and digital technology. A McGill Univ. research study made international news a few years back. It observed that "young adults tended to use a spatial approach when navigating a virtual maze, while older adults used a response strategy."

It concluded that the constant use of GPS may lead to "atrophy of the hippocampus, a risk factor for cognitive problems in normal aging and in Alzheimer's disease."

It may also lead to more map-shunning young people, hooked on GPS, finding themselves directionless on a road to nowhere."

Small business advisory offers tax webinar for entrepreneurs

Small business owners, entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals across Lanark County will have an opportunity to improve their understanding of taxation and financial record-keeping through a free webinar hosted by the Small Business Advisory Centre serving Smiths Falls and Lanark County.

The online session, entitled Tax Help for T1 Businesses, is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 27, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., featuring Clive Buchanan, a liaison officer with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

The webinar is designed specifically for sole proprietors, partnerships and self-employed individuals who want to better understand their tax obligations and avoid common mistakes when managing their business finances.

Participants will receive practical information about income tax requirements, Goods and Services Tax/ Harmonized Sales Tax (GST/HST), payroll obligations and general bookkeeping practices.

The session will also examine common tax errors made by small business operators and explain how maintaining accurate financial records can help businesses meet their reporting responsibilities.

Another component will demonstrate how entrepreneurs can use financial benchmarks relevant to their industries to evaluate business performance and identify potential areas for improvement.

The CRA representative will also provide information about services available to assist small business owners in understanding and meeting their tax obligations.

For entrepreneurs operating independently or managing smaller businesses without dedicated accounting departments, the webinar offers an opportunity to obtain information directly from a federal taxation representative.

The session is intended to answer frequently asked questions and help participants approach their financial and taxation responsibilities with greater confidence.

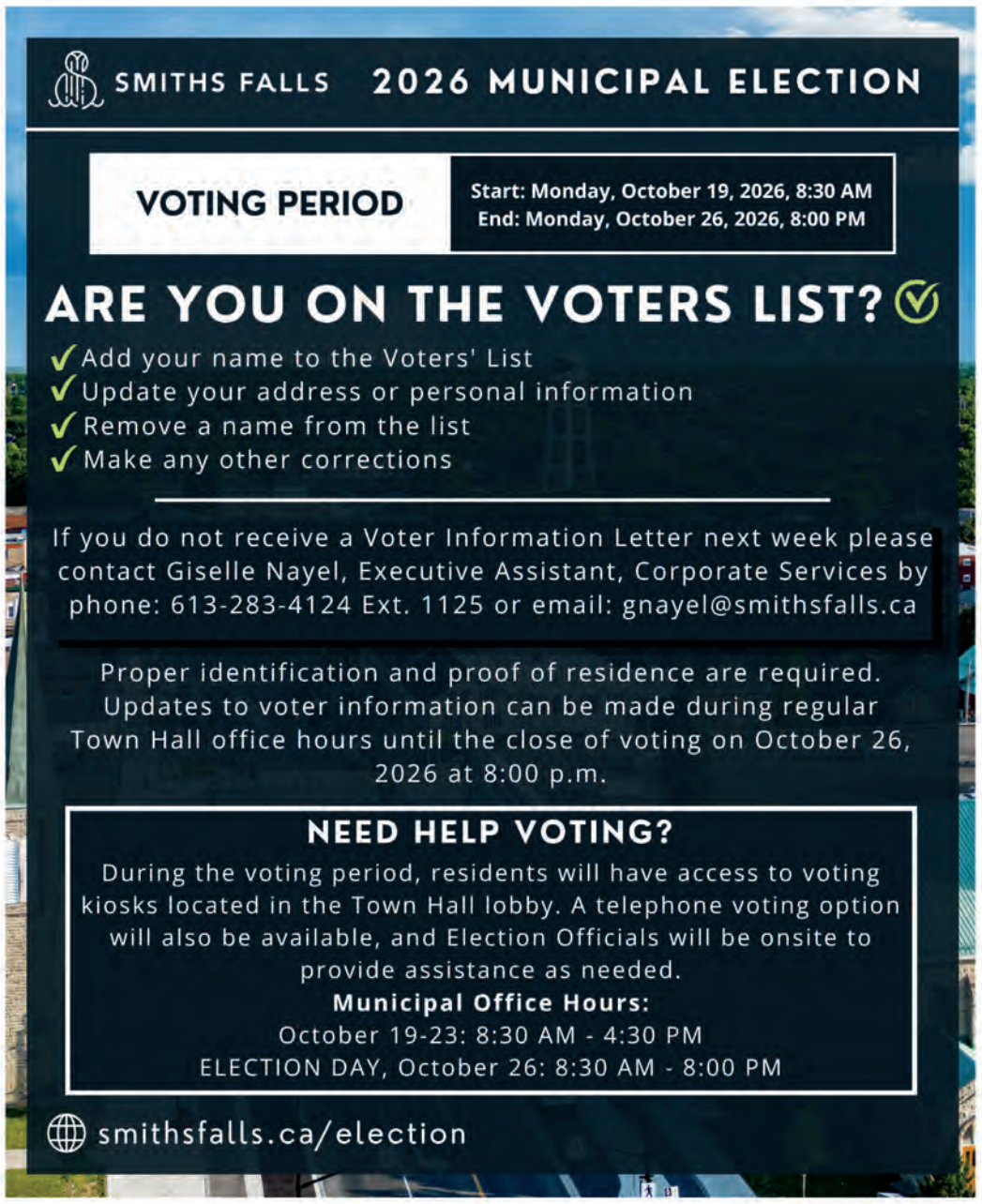
The webinar is free and will be presented live. It will not be recorded, making advance registration important for those wishing to participate. Anyone interested in attending can request the webinar link by emailing cjames@smallbizcentre.ca.

SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

TOWN PAGE

SMITHS FALLS

OCTOBER 14, 2026



COUNCIL MEETINGS

October 19, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council 5 PM
Attend in person at Town Hall (77 Beckwith Street North) or view live streamed proceedings on:
Facebook - facebook.com/townofsmithsfalls
YouTube - Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
For Council, Committee and Board meeting agendas, visit: smithsfalls.ca/meeting

NOTICE OF APPROVAL OF RENAMING PART OF CONFEDERATION DRIVE

Take notice that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls passed By-law 10724-2026 on October 5, 2026, in accordance with Street Naming By-law 8668-2014 for the renaming of part of Confederation Drive to "Veterans Way". The new street name will extend westward from Beckwith Street to the covered bridge as in the key map. Additional information relating to the naming of streets is available electronically, and may be obtained by contacting the undersigned during regular office hours Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Dated at the Town of Smiths Falls, this 14 day of October 2026.

Karl Grenke, MCIP, RPP, Manager of Development Services



HALLOWEEN SKATE AT THE YOUTH ARENA

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

Get into the Halloween spirit with a fun skate at the Smiths Falls Youth Arena on October 31 from 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Admission is $2 per person. Costumes are welcome, and all skaters aged 18 and under must wear a helmet. Come out for a festive hour of skating, music, costumes, and Halloween fun. We look forward to seeing you on the ice.

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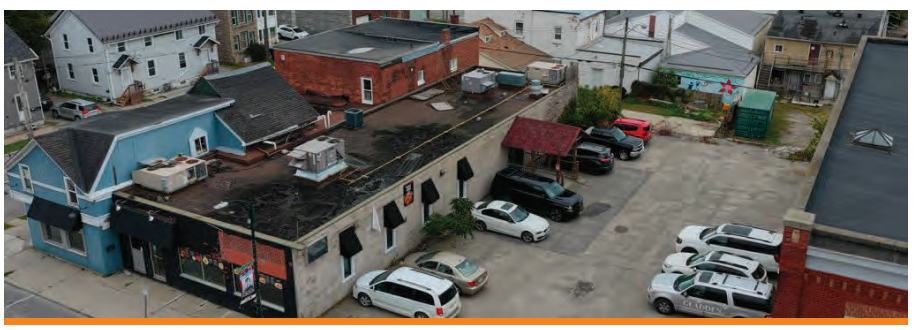
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144458

Mandatory masking returns to PSFDH as respiratory illness season approaches

Masks are back

Mandatory masking returned to the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital (PSFDH) on Saturday, Oct. 10, as hospital officials introduced additional precautions to protect patients, staff and visitors heading into the fall and winter respiratory illness season.

The new requirements apply at both the Perth and Smiths Falls hospital sites, where masks must now be worn in all clinical areas, emergency departments and outpatient clinic waiting rooms.

The hospital says masks are available at entrances and throughout both facilities to ensure patients and visitors can comply with the requirements.

The measures are intended to reduce the risk of infections spreading within the hospitals, particularly among vulnerable patients receiving medical treatment.

Hospital officials are also encouraging people experiencing symptoms of illness to reconsider non-essential visits.

"If you are feeling unwell, we encourage you to postpone your visit if possible or explore virtual care options when available," a hospital spokesperson said.

The return of mandatory masking comes as Ontario's health-care system prepares for another respiratory illness season, when influenza, COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) can place additional pressure on hospitals and emergency departments.

Ontario Health issued its fall and winter 2026-27 operational direction on Oct. 8, outlining preparations for increased seasonal demands on the province's health-care system.

Public Health Ontario also continues to monitor respiratory virus activity across the province, including influenza, COVID-19 and RSV.

The Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital operates two emergency departments, providing around-the-clock emergency medical services. According to the hospital, the departments collectively treat approximately 140 patients daily, or about 52,000 annually.

The hospital's existing visiting guidelines also advise people experiencing fever, cold symptoms, respiratory illness or other contagious conditions to avoid visiting hospitalized patients.

Visitors are encouraged to practise frequent hand hygiene using sanitizing stations provided throughout the facilities.

Hospital officials say the renewed masking requirements are part of their continuing commitment to maintaining a safe health-care environment for patients, physicians, employees and visitors.

The hospital has not indicated when the masking requirements will be lifted.

Across Lanark County

International Day of Rural Women recognizes contributions of women

From managing family farms and operating small businesses to volunteering in community organizations and providing essential services, rural women have helped shape the character and prosperity of Lanark County for generations.

Their contributions will be recognized Thursday, Oct. 15, as communities around the world mark International Day of Rural Women, a United Nations observance celebrating the achievements of women in agriculture, rural development and community life.

Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 and first observed in 2008, the day highlights the important role women play in food production, economic development and the well-being of rural communities.

Across Lanark County, women contribute to agricultural operations, manage businesses, work in health care and education, and provide leadership in local government and community organizations.

Women are involved in everything from livestock production and market gardening to tourism, retail, professional services and charitable organizations.

This year's recognition carries additional significance because the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has designated 2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer.

The initiative seeks to recognize women's contributions to agriculture while drawing attention to continuing inequalities in access to farmland, financing, technology and leadership opportunities.

These issues have particular relevance in rural Ontario, where family farms remain important to local economies and where agricultural operations increasingly depend on diversified businesses and new generations of farmers.



Andrea McCoy-Naperstkow

For many rural women, agricultural responsibilities are combined with employment outside the farm, childcare, household management and community volunteering.

The history of rural women's leadership in Lanark County is reflected in the Women's Institute movement, which helped generations of women improve education, health, family life and community services.

Local Women's Institute branches provided opportunities for education, social connections and leadership at a time when women had fewer opportunities to participate in public affairs.

That leadership continues today through agricultural organizations, volunteer groups, municipal councils and community service agencies.

Third generation farmer

A local example is Andrea McCoy-Naperstkow, a third-generation Lanark County farmer who serves as a director of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

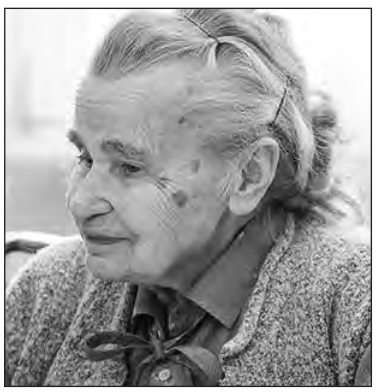
Writing earlier this year about the changing role of women in agriculture, she recalled growing up when women performed demanding farm work but were frequently excluded from business decisions and agricultural leadership.

Today, she says, women are increasingly taking their places as farm owners, decision-makers and agricultural advocates.

The Lanark Federation of Agriculture also recognizes contributions to rural life through its Agricultural Hall of Fame. Among its 2025 inductees was Lois James, honoured for her contributions to agriculture and the community.

Session on Oct.15

Dementia education in Maberly



Residents interested in learning more about dementia and how to support people living with the condition are invited to attend a free education session at Maberly Hall on Thursday, October 15.

The Alzheimer Society Lanark Leeds Grenville will host the two-hour information session from 10 a.m. until noon, providing practical advice and resources for families, caregivers and community members.

The presentation will cover several important topics, including maintaining brain health, understanding dementia-related behaviours and developing effective communication techniques when interacting with people experiencing cognitive changes.

Participants will also learn ways to provide compassionate support while helping individuals living with dementia maintain their dignity, independence and quality of life.

The session offers an opportunity for residents to ask questions, increase their understanding of dementia and learn about resources available to families affected by the condition.

With dementia affecting a growing number of Canadian families, education and community awareness are becoming increasingly important.

The session is free and open to the public. Advance registration is encouraged.

Rather than intervention

Smiths Falls to advise tenants on their rights

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Smiths Falls town council has opted to address the growing issue of renovictions – the often unlawful or bad-faith evictions of tenants by their landlord – with an educational, rather than an intervention.

That decision was made following a brief presentation on the subject from Mallory McNeely, the Town's Development Services Coordinator, during the September 28 committee of the whole meeting.

Council ultimately decided to follow McNeely's recommendation to "endorse an education and awareness-based approach to renovictions by directing staff to develop tenant information resources and continue relying on the existing provincial legislative framework (i.e. the recently amended Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, or Bill 97), rather than establishing a municipal renoviction bylaw."

In her staff report prepared for that meeting, McNeely pointed out that adopting a renoviction bylaw would have created financial and staffing challenges for the Town.

"Based on conversations with the City of Hamilton and City of London (both of which have renoviction bylaws in place), applications have required significant review, collaboration, and consultation with legal counsel on a case-by-case basis," she stated.

"Should a similar approach be taken (in Smiths Falls), this could result in additional administrative and legal costs for the Town… It is also important to note that these larger municipalities have greater financial and staffing resources available to support the program."

Prefacing a presentation during the September 10 Smiths Falls Equity for All Committee meeting, McNeely defined renovictions as "the displacement of a tenant after being given an N13 notice, which is issued by the landlord for the reason of renovations or repairs (meaning the tenant must vacate the premises)."

She added that, "while this process can be legitimate, in the past few years it's been used by some landlords…to essentially remove the (the long-standing) tenant after doing no renovations, and bumping their rent up to market value," which they can't afford.

During that meeting, McNeely presented three options for dealing with renovictions, choices that were forwarded to council for their consideration.

The first was a proposed bylaw – endorsed by the Equity for All Committee – which included a requirement for landlords to apply for a licence from the Town to prove renovation work was actually required and would occur, and that the unit needed to be vacated by the tenant(s) while those renovations/repairs were being made.

That ordinance also stipulated that the landlord would be required to provide temporary accommodations for the tenant(s) during the renovation period.

The other two options were a "scaled down" version of the proposed bylaw, with amendments, which according to McNeely, "wouldn't go beyond" the Residential Tenancies Act; and a policy that would focus on educating tenants of their rights under the RTA.

During the recent committee of the whole meeting, Mayor Shawn Pankow stressed that education was an important component in tackling the renovictions scourge.

"About 47 percent of our (town) residents rent their homes…And over my three terms as mayor…I've connected with dozens of people who had been impacted by bad-faith evictions," he said.

"They'd either already experienced it, and didn't know their rights, or had been told by their landlord to move out. The key thing… is communication. Because what we have found in so many situations is that people are not aware of their rights (as tenants)."

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Fifteen council candidates make their pitch to a packed Smiths Falls election meeting



PHOTO: Jacqueline Marie

COUNCIL candidates, left to right: Chance Peterson,Jennifer Miller, and Chris Maguire.

All 15 candidates competing for six seats on Smiths Falls town council attended an all-candidates meeting Wednesday, Oct. 7, hosted by the Rotary Club of Smiths Falls in the Lancaster Room at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95.

The well-attended event followed a separate mayoral debate held Sept. 30, also organized by the Rotary Club, with Peter McKenna, Christopher Cummings and Nate Morris.

With Mayor Shawn Pankow retiring after 12 years and two sitting councillors not seeking another council term, the Oct. 26 municipal election will bring significant changes to the council table.

The council candidates represent a mixture of incumbents, community volunteers, businesspeople and political newcomers, offering voters competing visions for the town's future.

Affordability, municipal taxation, responsible spending, policing, housing, infrastructure and government transparency are among the major issues emerging during the election campaign.

The following summaries draw on candidates' publicly documented campaign positions.

Candidate platforms

Greg Hull believes our downtown is one of our greatest assets, and wants to see it thrive: supporting the small businesses that give Smiths Falls its character, and making it easier for new ones to take root here. At the same time, he believes growth has to go hand in hand with responsible spending.

Every dollar the town invests in our roads, water systems, and other infrastructure should be spent wisely he adds

Chance Peterson, also known as Chance Lauziere-Peterson, has endorsed a series of proposals addressing municipal accountability, affordable housing, lower water bills and policing reform.

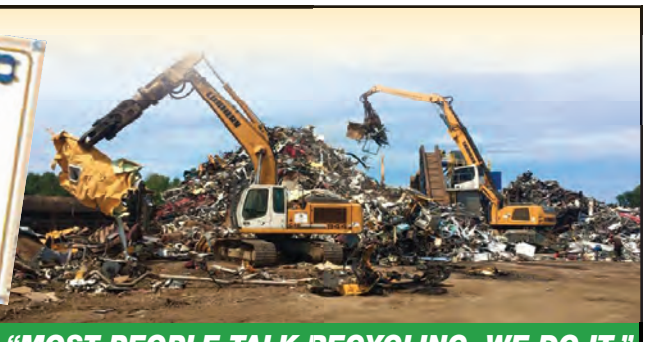
He supports stronger public oversight, improvements to youth services, fair bylaw enforcement and measures intended to make municipal government more responsive to residents.

Jennifer Miller, an incumbent first elected in 2022, is emphasizing continued investment in municipal infrastructure, affordable housing and community amenities. She argues that Smiths Falls must maintain and replace aging roads, bridges, sewers and public facilities

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while seeking government grants to reduce the financial burden on taxpayers. Miller also supports improving parks, protecting green spaces and strengthening the downtown as the community grows.

Spring Loomes is campaigning on fiscal responsibility, accessible municipal facilities and greater accountability in policing. She wants sustainable municipal budgets, better maintenance of existing public assets and stronger support for downtown businesses, community events and volunteer organizations.

Loomes has also identified accessibility improvements for people with disabilities and more transparent police governance as important priorities.

Stephen Robinson, an incumbent seeking another term, is one of four sitting councillors competing for re-election.

If re-elected, Robinson said supporting Smiths Falls businesses will remain one of his priorities. Robinson said a strong business sector creates employment, attracts visitors and contributes to a more active and vibrant community.

Infrastructure will also continue to be a priority, although Robinson said improvements have to reflect the town's financial capacity.

Bill Dickson, a retired Ontario Provincial Police communications staffer, is placing affordability, municipal accountability and economic development at the centre of his campaign.

He wants council to work with other governments, agencies and the private sector to address housing and food costs. Dickson also advocates transparent municipal operations, accountability in policing and attracting businesses that will create jobs and strengthen the local tax base.

Alex Brown is promising tighter control over municipal spending and improvements to how town hall operates. Drawing on his information technology and data analysis background, Brown wants better cost controls on capital projects, less reliance on borrowing and improved communication between residents and municipal departments.

He has proposed measurable customer-service standards and public tracking of municipal requests so taxpayers can see how their concerns are addressed.

Peggy Lee Tye-Bernicky is seeking one of the six council seats as a challenger. advocates aninvestigation on why some are not maintaining their homes or businesses. Tye-Bernicky said that when the reason is known the town might intervene to help those struggling with maintenance work.



COUNCIL candidates Marie Pierre Guerin and Greg Hull share a moment.

PHOTO: Jacqueline Marie

Zachary Thoms, a local business owner with experience in the skilled trades, is emphasizing business development, support for families and strengthening community life. He sees economic growth and a supportive environment for businesses as important to the town's future. Thoms has also identified affordable housing and policing among the issues residents have raised, while promoting community organizations and opportunities for young people.

Marie-Pier Guerin says rising living costs have made food security and affordability issues that municipal leaders can no longer afford to overlook.

Her platform centres on four initiatives, beginning with expanding opportunities for residents to grow and preserve their own food.

Dawn Quinn, an incumbent councillor, is seeking another four-year term. Quinn says she would bring to another term her experience from years of living and working in Smiths Falls, along with involvement in community organizations and initiatives.

Listening to residents and understanding their concerns would remain an important part of her approach, she says.

Among Quinn's priorities is physician recruitment to help improve access to health-care services in the community.

Christopher McGuire is another sitting councillor seeking re-election. As an incumbent, McGuire faced questions about the municipality's direction over the past four years and what changes or continued investments he would support.

Lewis Koluk is among the challengers hoping to bring a new perspective to Smiths Falls council.

His campaign campaign focused on infrastructure, healthcare, entrepreneurship and a municipal government that can respond quickly to changing community needs.

James Creighton says sensible growth, stronger public engagement and improving affordability and livability are among his priorities if elected. Creighton supports continued development, but growth must ultimately benefit the people already living in Smiths Falls.

Leslie Allison Richardson on rounds out the field of council hopefuls.executive director of the Smiths Falls & District Chamber of Commerce, supports a firmer stance with landlords who live outside of Smiths Falls. If elected she will make sure they clean up or improve their properties, regardless of where they live.

The Rotary Club's decision to hold two separate all-candidates evenings reflected the unusually large field of candidates and the importance of giving residents opportunities to hear directly from those seeking municipal office.

Four sitting councillors — Miller, Robinson, Quinn and McGuire — are standing for re-election. Councillor Peter McKenna is running for mayor, while Councillor Jay Brennan is not seeking another term.

This report also included information from previous news stories of the candidates published in the *Record-Journal.*

ELECTION COVERAGE

Only the Smiths Falls Record-Journal has complete town election coverage. Be sure to get your copy every week from newsstands everywhere in the town.

Smiths Falls Record Journal

Town supports firefighting in war zone of Zolochiv, Ukraine

A community-wide effort is helping provide much-needed firefighting equipment and emergency supplies to Zolochiv, Ukraine, as Smiths Falls strengthens its relationship with its Ukrainian twin community.

The shipment includes 26 sets of firefighter bunker gear, helmets, boots, water rescue equipment, emergency lighting and work gloves. Also included are bottles of locally produced maple syrup, offering recipients a taste of Canada.

The initiative was organized through the Ukrainian Twinning Working Group, a subcommittee of the Town of Smiths Falls' Equity for All Committee, following a request for assistance from officials in Zolochiv.

Mayor Shawn Pankow contacted the Smiths Falls Fire Department to determine what equipment could be made available to help the Ukrainian community.

What began as a local response quickly expanded into a regional initiative, drawing support from neighbouring fire departments, businesses, volunteers and community organizations.

Contributors helped collect equipment, organize supplies, arrange shipping logistics and provide donations to ensure the shipment could make its way to Ukraine.

"This is a wonderful example of what can happen when a community comes together to help others," said Pankow.

"From local businesses and organizations to neighbouring municipalities and volunteers, so many people stepped forward to support a community facing unimaginable challenges. We are grateful to everyone who contributed to this effort."

The donated equipment is intended to help firefighters and emergency responders in Zolochiv, where communities continue to face significant challenges as Russia's war against Ukraine continues.

The shipment also demonstrates how the twinning agreement between Smiths Falls and Zolochiv is developing beyond symbolic expressions of friendship into practical assistance.

The two municipalities formally established their relationship on June 16, 2025, when they signed an Agreement of Twinness and Cooperation.

The agreement was designed to promote friendship, cultural exchange and collaboration between the communities.

Town officials expressed appreciation to the numerous individuals, businesses, neighbouring municipalities and organizations whose contributions made the shipment possible.

FIREFIGHTERS attend to a blaze caused by a drone attack hitting Zolochiv.

PHOTO: Government of Ukraine

The fourth annual

Female First Responders Camp to empower next generation

Under way this weekend in Perth

Young women from across Lanark County will have an opportunity to experience the challenges and excitement of working in emergency services when the fourth annual Lanark County Female First Responders Camp takes place Friday, Oct. 16, and Saturday, Oct. 17.

Hosted by Perth Fire Services at 1881 Rogers Road, the two-day camp introduces participants to the demanding responsibilities of police officers, paramedics and firefighters through hands-on training, mentorship and practical exercises.

The initiative is designed to encourage young women to consider careers in emergency services, where women have traditionally been underrepresented, particularly in firefighting and certain policing roles.

Open to young women aged 15 to 21 residing in Lanark County, the camp provides an opportunity to develop confidence, leadership and teamwork while learning skills that could prove valuable in everyday emergencies.

Participants will experience a variety of emergency response activities, including handling firefighting hoses, administering first aid, conducting search and rescue operations, and managing simulated emergency scenes.

The exercises will be supervised by experienced emergency personnel who will provide instruction, share professional experiences and explain the training and qualifications required to enter their respective careers.

The camp brings together representatives from the Lanark County detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police, Smiths Falls Police Service, Lanark County Paramedic Service and local fire departments.

Their collaboration gives participants an opportunity to explore several emergency service professions while learning how police, firefighters and paramedics work together when responding to incidents.

Organizers say the program is about more than learning practical emergency response techniques. It is also intended to help young women discover their abilities, overcome challenges and gain the confidence to pursue careers they may not previously have considered.

"The growth and boldness we see from participants over just two days is truly inspiring," organizers said. "These young women are rising to the challenge and discovering their potential."

Now entering its fourth year, the camp reflects continuing efforts by Lanark County's emergency services community to encourage greater female participation in public safety careers.

Beyond the physical training, participants will have opportunities to meet women and men currently serving as first responders, ask questions about their careers and learn about the education, recruitment and training processes involved.

The experience also emphasizes communication, problem-solving and teamwork, qualities essential to responding effectively in high-pressure emergency situations.

Possible career choice

For participants considering careers in policing, firefighting or paramedicine, the camp provides an introduction to the realities of front-line service in a supportive learning environment.

Organizers hope participants will leave with new friendships, valuable practical knowledge and a stronger belief in their ability to make a difference in their communities.

The annual event also delivers an important message to young women across Lanark County: careers in emergency services are open to those willing to accept the challenges and responsibilities of protecting their communities, says a spokesman.



A self-defence session at a past camp was all in fun.

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Viewing: Monday, October 19th, 3:00pm – 6:00pm
Soft Close: Tuesday, October 20th – 5:00pm

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Entertainment & Events

Halloween haunts, live music and fall festivities fare on tap

From haunted heritage tours and live concerts to downtown Halloween celebrations and seasonal markets, Smiths Falls residents have plenty of entertainment choices during the second half of October.

The community's autumn calendar features activities for families, music lovers, shoppers and anyone interested in a few Halloween chills.

ABBA music returns Oct. 16: Fans of the Swedish pop sensation ABBA can enjoy an evening of familiar hits Friday, Oct. 16, when the Rotary Club of Smiths Falls presents the SOS ABBA Experience. The musical tribute runs from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. and promises an entertaining evening of songs associated with one of the world's most successful pop groups.

The concert also provides an opportunity to support the community activities of the local Rotary Club.

Haunted Heritage House opens Oct. 16: The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum, at 11 Old Slys Rd., is preparing to frighten visitors during its annual Haunted Heritage House attraction.

The Halloween experience takes place Oct. 16, 17, 23 and 24, giving guests an opportunity to explore the historic building after dark.

The museum, normally known for preserving the community's history, takes on a considerably more mysterious atmosphere during the seasonal attraction.

Advance registration is strongly recommended because the popular event frequently sells out. Information is available by calling 613-283-6311.

Mary's Merry Minstrels perform Oct. 18: Music lovers can enjoy a concert by Mary's Merry Minstrels at Trinity United Church on Sunday, Oct. 18.

The performance offers an alternative to the month's Halloween-themed attractions, bringing a musical gathering to one of the community's familiar venues.

Residents interested in attending should confirm ticket arrangements and performance time with the organizers.

Pumpkin carving contest begins Oct. 23: The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum will hold its Community Pumpkin Carving Contest and Pumpkin Walk from Oct. 23 to 31.

Individuals, families, businesses and school classes are invited to participate by creating carved pumpkins for display.

The contest offers a chance for local artists of all ages to demonstrate their creativity, with fall-themed prizes available.

Additional information can be obtained from the museum at 613-283-6311.

Downtown Skele-Bration returns Oct. 24: Downtown Smiths Falls will take on a Halloween atmosphere Saturday, Oct. 24, with the return of Skele-Bration.

The family-friendly celebration runs from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and is aimed at young ghosts, goblins and their families.

The annual event provides an opportunity to enjoy seasonal activities while visiting the downtown shopping district.

Later that day, the community's Halloween celebrations will continue with the Smiths Falls Mystic Market.

Scheduled from 5 to 9 p.m. on Russell Street East, the market will feature vendors offering an assortment of unusual merchandise and Halloween-inspired goods.

Halloween Town Market and dance party Oct. 25: Families looking for additional Halloween activities can visit Lower Reach Park on Sunday, Oct. 25, when the Halloween Town Market runs from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The program includes a Halloween scavenger hunt beginning at 11 a.m., bingo at noon and a glow-in-the-dark dance party at 1 p.m. in Kinsmen Hall.

The dance party will feature The Trevor Show, an interactive children's entertainer offering music, games and audience participation.

Tickets are advertised at $18.

Halloween tea offers a mysterious afternoon: For those seeking a different type of Halloween entertainment, medium Christine Rogerson will headline a Halloween Tea at Kinsmen Hall on Sunday, Oct. 25, from 3 to 5 p.m.

The afternoon combines seasonal refreshments with a group mediumship presentation.

Tickets are $45 per person, with attendance limited to 30 guests. Organizers advise that purchasing a ticket does not guarantee an individual reading.

A look ahead to November: Smiths Falls will continue its cultural programming into November with the annual art showcase running from Nov. 8 to Dec. 19.

The town's Celebration of Lights is scheduled to begin Nov. 12 and continue through Jan. 4.

The CPKC Holiday Train is expected Nov. 28, the same day as the Cookie Crawl and the first scheduled North Pole Express train ride at the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario.

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Obituaries



FOLEY
Elsie May

JUNE 26, 1923 – SEPT. 28, 2026

Elsie May Foley (nee Catling), entered in to rest at Perth Community Care Centre, with her family by her side. She spent her young years in Cardiff, Wales where she met her husband Harry D. Foley, a young soldier. Elsie came to Canada in 1945 as a war bride. She joined her husband in Balderson, Ontario where they raised their family. She enjoyed many years of teaching Bible Study to children, as well as a study group with a number of ladies.

Left to mourn her loss is daughter Patricia, son David (Brenda Wark), son John as well as many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband Harry D. Foley, son-in-law Bruce Owen, son Kenneth, daughter-in-law Patsy Farrell, daughter Pamela, son-in-law Wayne Ritchie and daughter-in-law Ferne Wright.

The family would like to thank the Doctors and staff at Perth Community Care Centre for the wonderful care during her stay.

A private family service was held in the Blair & Son Chapel, 15 Gore St. West, Perth followed by interment in Elmwood Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, a memorial contribution in memory of Elsie to the Perth & Smiths Falls District Hospital Foundation or the Gideons would be appreciated by the family.

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For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com

CARNRITE
Edward Earl "Eddie"

JANUARY 11, 1949 – OCTOBER 8, 2026



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the sudden passing of Edward Earl Carnrite on October 8, 2026 in his 78th year.

He leaves behind his beloved wife of 57 years, June (Wheeler) Carnrite. He will be deeply missed by sons, Kevin (Dorothy) Carnrite, Wayne (Becky) Carnrite, his grandchildren Kendra (Gage) Echlin, Nicole Carnrite (Nathan Campbell), Victoria Carnrite (Dylan Belleperche) Curtis Carnrite, Deklan Raymond, Connor Raymond, great grandchildren Pyper Campbell and Caden Echlin. His siblings Linda Ruttle-Carnrite, Bruce (Barb) Carnrite, Carol (Keith) Mordy, Kenny (Donna) Carnrite, Jack (Brenda) Wheeler, Vernon (Judy) Wheeler, Patricia North, Doug (Wenda) Wheeler, Julia (John) Miller, Sylvia Crain, Kevin (JoAnne) Wheeler, Nancy (Brian) McGlade, and Billie (Valerie) Wheeler. Eddie was predeceased by his parents Earl and Irene Carnrite, his brother Robert Carnrite, and brothers-in-law Norman Crain and Victor North. He will be sadly missed by all in the extended Carnrite and Wheeler families including nieces, nephews and many wonderful family and friends.

Eddie was a staple in the community. He retired in 2001 after 29 years as a dispatch with the OPP Perth Detachment. Eddie was a born athlete-from a bowling champion to a dart champion, to a home run hitter and pitcher, to the golf greens. Eddie was a master organizer of the Perth men's golf league for multiple years. He loved watching his Ottawa Senators but enjoyed watching his sons and grandsons playing hockey even more. Eddie was constantly on the go and was always the first to help anyone. Eddie always had a smile on his face, loved to pull pranks at work and loved to laugh. His greatest love was June and his greatest achievement was his family.

A special thank you to Lanark County Paramedics.

There will be a celebration of Eddie's life at Timber Run Golf & Country Club, 154 Caldwell St, Lanark, on Sunday, October 18th, 2026 from 12:00 noon to 4:00pm and everyone is welcome to come celebrate this remarkable man. Please feel free to wear a jersey or golf shirt of your choice. In remembrance of Eddie, Memorial donations to the Heart and Stroke Foundation or the Prostate Cancer Foundation Canada would be appreciated.

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Or, you can call us directly at 514 503-1593.

Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.

Obituaries



COOKE
Jean Ann (nee Gallagher)

NOV. 28, 1937 – OCT. 7, 2026

Jean Ann Cooke passed away peacefully at her home on the shores of Bobs Lake, surrounded by her family, on October 7, 2026.

Beloved wife of Theodore "Derek" Cooke for 67 years, Jean was a loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She will be remembered for her love of nature, storytelling, theatre and community, and will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

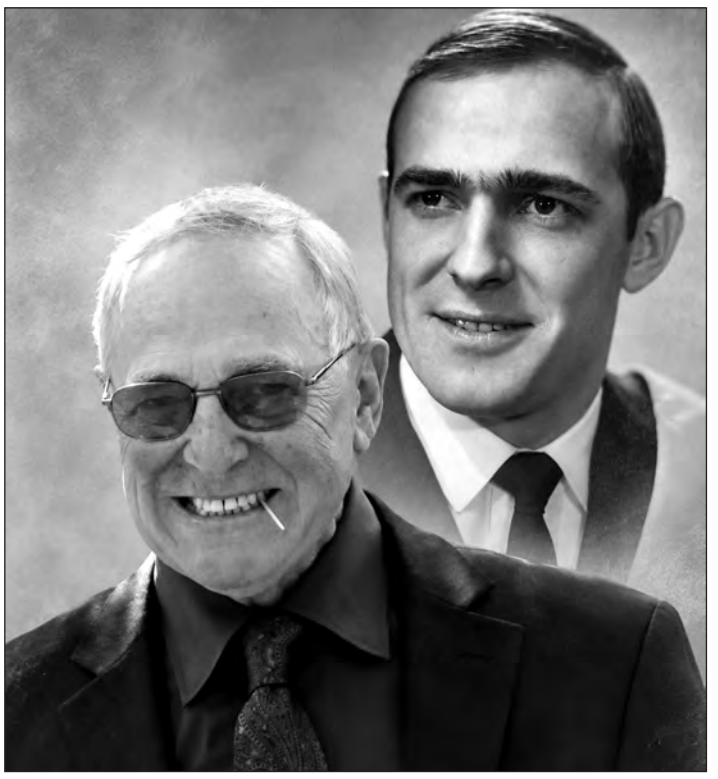
A celebration of Jean's life will take place at a later date.

For Jean's full obituary and to leave a condolence, please visit www.blairandson.com.

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WIDENMAIER
Robert Glen

MARCH 28, 1939 – SEPTEMBER 21, 2026



Peacefully at home on Widenmaier Rd. with his beloved son by his side on Monday, September 21, 2026. Robert (Bob) Glen Widenmaier at the age of 87. Father of Kristen (Ron), Kerri (Kevin) and David; Grandpa Bobby to Carver, Gaelan, John and Doyle. Son of the late Frederick Widenmaier and Kathleen (Lake) Widenmaier. Predeceased by sister Joyce Bradley and brothers John (Jack) Widenmaier and Kenneth Widenmaier and greatly missed by his brother William (Bill) Widenmaier and sister-in-law Roberta (Bobbie) Widenmaier. Cherished Uncle of Wendy, Joy, Lorna, Kathleen, Wayne, Darlene, Wanita, Wendi, and Jill. Fondly remembered by close friends David Wilson and Dave Lemke, the residents of Widenmaier Rd. and Drummond Center, and extended friends and family.

Bob was a principal for many years in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and often recounted fond memories of this time. Many will remember Bob from the soccer fields of Conlon Farm, with a toothpick hanging from his mouth, coaching various teams and encouraging youth in soccer. Bob will also be remembered by many for his love of music, his guitar playing, and if you were 'lucky' enough, planting trees in spring.

In keeping with Bob's wishes there will be no funeral, but family and friends are encouraged to join us in Celebration of Bob at his home of 495 Widenmaier Rd. on Saturday, October 17, from 2-5 pm.

Arrangements are in the care of Blair & Son Funeral Home, Perth.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
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For condolences or further information, visit our website:
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DOLGOWICZ
Anya (Anna)

MAY 16, 1925 – SEPT. 29, 2026

With heavy hearts we announce the peaceful passing of Anya Dolgowicz at home in Smiths Falls on Tuesday September 29, 2026 at the remarkable age of 101 years.

Predeceased by her husband Julian Dolgowicz (1972). Loving mother to Krystyna Hughes (Robert) and Rick Dolgowicz (Frances). "Grandma D", as she was affectionately known, will be deeply missed by her 5 grandchildren, Jeff (Claire), Tanya (Brian), Cindy (John), Angie (Steve) and Michael (Christina) and her 12 great-grandchildren (Luke, Kaitlyn, Branden, Ethan, Samantha, Troy, Ana, Julia, Isaac, Julia, Hudson and Celia).

"Grandma D" will be deeply missed, fondly remembered, and never forgotten.

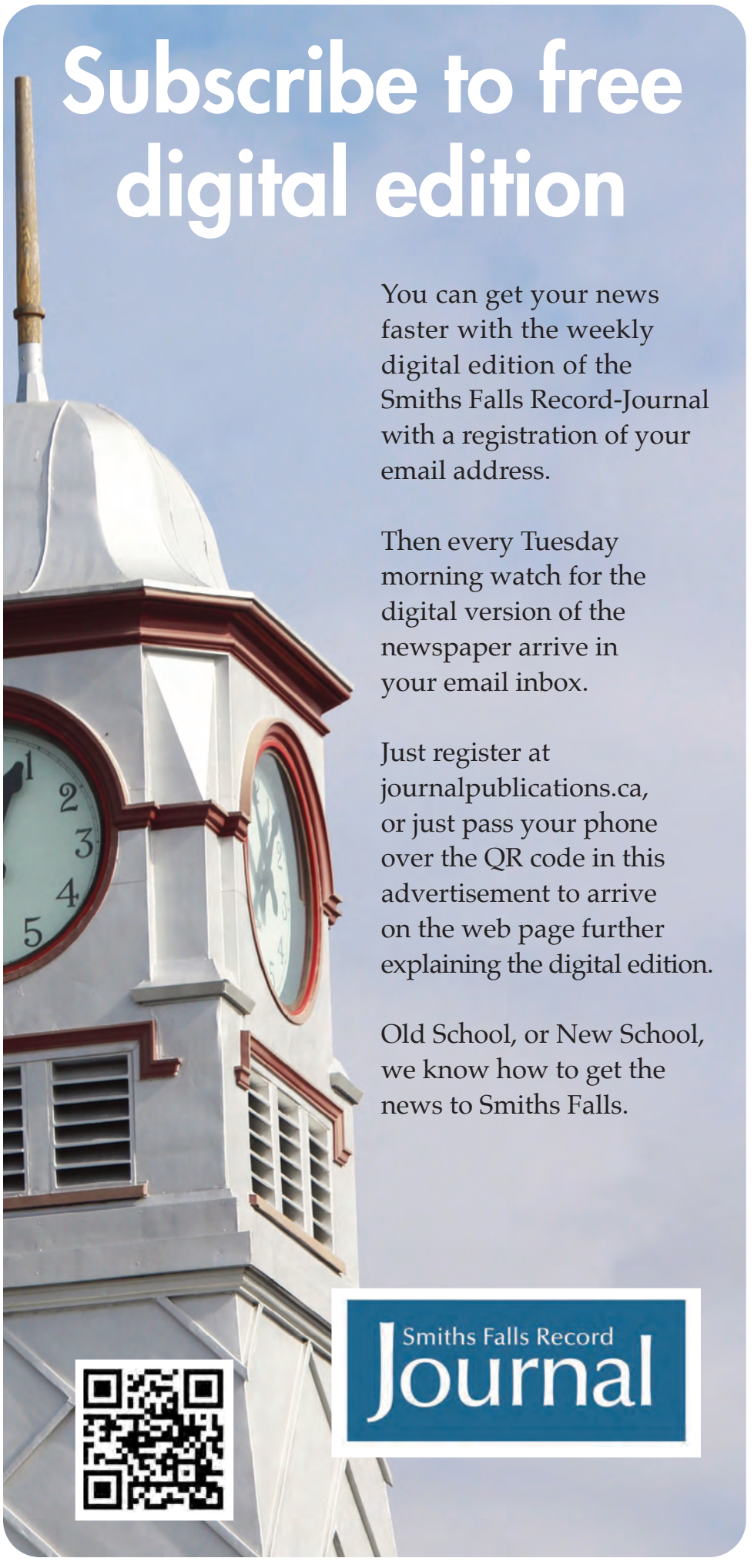
In accordance with Anya's wishes, a private family gathering will be held to celebrate her life. Her ashes will be laid to rest beside her husband at St. Francis de Sales Cemetery.



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Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.



Council approves upgrade heritage grant for building

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Smiths Falls town council gave the go-ahead for a minor upgrade to one of the downtown core's most recognizable and historic structures by approving a Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP) application for the building at 1 to 13 Chambers Street, which is the locations of several businesses, during the October 5 regular council meeting.

Council's decision came after the Smiths Falls Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) gave its approval to the application – which requested replacement of the building's exterior wooden stairs and wooden door at the back of the property, abutting the Rideau River – during its meeting on September 22.

As required under the Ontario Heritage Act, the application was subsequently forwarded to council for their consideration.

The MHC recommended that council approve the application with the condition that the applicant "provide a plan for how moisture mitigation will be dealt with from the installation of the new stairs."

During the recent council meeting, Karl Grenke, the Town's Manager of Development Services, stated that the property owner had met that condition by "providing details on how to prevent moisture from getting into the wall, around the bolts (securing the staircase to the building)," primarily through the use of caulking "wherever the wall is pierced…"

Grenke added that the owner of the Downtown Smiths Falls Heritage Conservation District (HCD)-designated property wants to replace its existing door and staircase, using like-for-like pressure-treated wood, for safety and security reasons.

"He said he's been dealing with vandalism where people have been breaking into the basement of the building by accessing the stairs to get to the door at the bottom, and in time, this has started to degrade," said Grenke.

"It's a patched-together wooden door (not thought to be original)…and has been broken a number of times."

During the recent MHC meeting, the Town's Planning Clerk Marie Elmsley explained that the application for the repairs was somewhat atypical.

"The stairs are not specifically mentioned in the HCD as an attribute, nor are they listed as an exemption from the Heritage Alteration Permit process," she said, adding that "doors apart from storefronts and façade patterns, are not specifically listed in the attributes of the HCD," and that under a section of the document pertaining to Heritage Permit exemptions, "alterations to rear façades that are not visible from the public realm of the HCD are exempt."

However, in the case of this property, the rear façade "is visible from Beckwith Street south of the intersection of Chambers (Street) and Beckwith and from across the water making it subject to Permit requirements."

The flat-iron style building at 1 to 13 Chambers St., constructed in 1912 by local entrepreneur Bert Soper, originally opened as the 850-seat Rideau Theatre.

Renamed the Capitol Theatre in 1929, it hosted live theatrical performances and motion pictures until it closed in 1949, after which the "new" Soper Theatre – which itself closed in 2012 and was demolished the following year – opened on Main Street West.

In the ensuing decades, the Chambers Street building has housed a number of commercial and retail tenants.

Smiths Falls adopts a new Official Plan

The Town of Smiths Falls has adopted a new Official Plan designed to guide residential development, economic growth and infrastructure investment over the next 30 years.

The plan follows two years of public consultation and planning studies and establishes policies intended to manage growth while preserving the community's character.

Key priorities include encouraging housing development, revitalizing the downtown, improving transportation connections and enhancing public spaces.

Mayor Shawn Pankow described the adoption as a significant milestone for the municipality.

"Smiths Falls has experienced considerable growth in recent years, and this Plan provides a roadmap for how we can continue to welcome new residents and businesses while preserving the character, livability, and strengths that make our community unique," Pankow said.

Town's parkette plans could include a waterfall

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Water – in the form of either a fountain or falls – will be part of the design of the municipal parkette and gateway feature that is under development at the intersection of Abbott Street North and Lombard Street.

In a staff report presented at the October 5 committee of the whole meeting, the Town's Director of Community Services Stephanie Clark states that the locale "represents an important entrance into the community and provides an opportunity to create a more prominent and welcoming gateway into Smiths Falls."

In that vein, she explains that Town staff have been working with Ottawa-based architecture and planning firm Fotenn Planning and Design to develop a concept "that builds upon the existing curved flower bed/feature wall and landscaping while introducing a more prominent municipal entrance feature, as part of ongoing improvements" to the location.

A schematic concept proposes a gateway sign incorporating the Town logo and branding, "together with landscaping and a complementary water feature," states Clark, adding that the design "is intended to create a cohesive entrance feature rather than treating the sign, landscaping and fountain as separate elements."

The concept plan has been developed "to accommodate a future decorative fountain and fully contained water basin adjacent to the gateway sign," adds Clark, with the technical drawings identifying "the general location and relationship of the fountain, sign wall, existing curved wall and landscaping."

Coun. Chris McGuire was disappointed with the plan in its current form.

"When I think of a fountain, the whole point…is to get a 360-degree look at it. The fountain proposed…is behind a wall and forms a sign," he said. "I don't think it's going to have the (desired) presence."

Coun. McGuire added that he doesn't see "the 'wow' factor in what Fotenn has done," and that he hopes discussions on the parkette/gateway continue with the next council, leading to something that has an attention-grabbing effect.

Mayor Shawn Pankow provided a take on how water could be incorporated into the site's design.

"When I think of a water feature, I can't help but think about our name, 'Smiths Falls,' and flowing water, falling water," he said.

"I'm almost wondering before we put a (gateway) sign up that we look at how water would flow over, or adjacent to, or be part of that gateway sign.

"Everyone who comes into Smiths Falls says, 'Where's the falls?' Well, they could be right there," added Mayor Pankow, smiling.

Clark said the mayor's suggestion will be considered.

"We can certainly look at having water flow over top of the sign or something like that. It was an option (before). We can bring it back to the table," she said, telling council that Town staff wants the Abbott/Lombard streets intersection gateway feature to be something that's esthetically appealing across the four seasons.

"One of the things that's particularly important to us is ensuring that the corner is activated and visually interesting all year round," said Clark.

"As you've seen, the landscaping is quite lovely this year, during the growing season, but we want to make sure that we have a presence in this space in the fall and the winter as well."

However the project evolves, Clark told council/committee it will be a vast improvement over the "old, dilapidated house" that existed on the site – formerly 54 Lombard St. – until the building was purchased by the Town in March 2019 and later demolished for the purpose of expanding the Abbott/Lombard Street intersection, as well as improving the view for anyone coming into town via that route.

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144624

Police investigate sexual assault at Lower Reach Park – Page 2

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2026 SMITHS FALLS, ONTARIO SMITHSFALLS.JOURNAL@GMAIL.COM

Smiths Falls Record Journal



Candidates make their final pitch for votes

PAGE 3-9-10-11

SF Police respond to 682 calls in September

PAGE 12

Chimo Elementary School held its annual Turkey Trot, bringing students, families, and staff, together for a great cause. Because of their generosity the food bank received a big donation. And of course the students had fun.

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144383

Police investigate sexual assault at Lower Reach Park

Smiths Falls police are seeking the public's assistance in identifying a suspect and a vehicle believed to be connected to a sexual assault at Lower Reach Park on Friday evening, Oct. 16.

The Smiths Falls Police Service (SFPS) reported that the incident occurred at approximately 5:15 p.m. and that investigators are attempting to identify a vehicle and its occupants as part of the ongoing investigation.

Police describe the suspect as a Black male with a clean-shaven face.

The vehicle involved is described as a white Dodge Caravan with a cracked windshield and garbage visible through the front windshield. The licence plate number is unknown.

Investigators believe the vehicle was being driven by a second individual described as having long hair.

Police are appealing to anyone who was in or near Lower Reach Park around the time of the incident to come forward with information that could assist the investigation.

Residents, businesses and motorists who travelled through the area Friday evening are being asked to review any available security, surveillance or dashboard camera footage that may have captured the suspect vehicle or activity relevant to the investigation.

Investigators are particularly interested in hearing from anyone who recalls seeing a white Dodge Caravan matching the description or who witnessed suspicious activity in the vicinity of the park.

Anyone with information, including video footage that may assist investigators, is asked to contact the Smiths Falls Police Service at 613-283-0357.

Hydro One reschedules planned town power outage to Sun. Oct. 25

Nearly 3,900 Hydro One customers in Smiths Falls will experience a brief interruption in electrical service on Sunday, Oct. 25, following the rescheduling of a planned outage originally set for Oct. 18.

Hydro One says the outage will begin at 6 a.m. and last approximately five minutes, with power expected to be restored by 6:05 a.m.

The interruption will affect 3,864 customers, all of whom have been notified of the change.

The utility says the outage is necessary to allow crews to switch electrical equipment while carrying out maintenance work.

Although the interruption is expected to be short, Hydro One encourages residents to take precautions.

Customers should charge mobile devices, disconnect sensitive appliances and ensure backup arrangements are available for essential medical equipment.

Residents relying on sump pumps should consider backup power, particularly in flood-prone areas. Generators must be operated outdoors, away from windows and doors.

Motorists are reminded to treat intersections with non-functioning traffic signals as all-way stops.



AMY Tughan is the Rideau Artist of the Year in the People's Choice category.

Rideau Artist of the Year in people's choice competition goes to Amy Tughan

Artist Amy Tughan has been named Rideau Artist of the Year in the People's Choice category for her original artwork, Under the Bridge, a piece celebrating the beauty and tranquility of the Rideau Canal in downtown Smiths Falls.

The announcement was made by the Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum, which congratulated Tughan on receiving the recognition.

Her winning artwork depicts a quiet section of the Rideau Canal near the Beckwith Street Bridge, where boats travel through the locks and the canal widens into the river.

In her submission, Tughan described the location as one of her favourite places in Smiths Falls, particularly during the evening hours when the waterfront takes on a special atmosphere.

"This is the other side of the locks where the boats enter/exit under the Beckwith St. Bridge. It's a quiet spot with a beautiful view of the canal as it broadens out into the river," Tughan explained.

"It's one of my favourite spots. When the lamps come on in the evening and the fireflies come out to play, it's magical."

The artwork captures a familiar local landmark from a perspective that emphasizes the natural beauty and peaceful surroundings of the historic waterway.

As the People's Choice winner, Tughan received $100 in Downtown Business Association dollars, awarded by the Town of Smiths Falls Economic Development and Tourism Department.

The award recognizes not only Tughan's artistic talent but also the connection between local artists and the community's distinctive heritage and waterfront scenery.

The Rideau Canal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, remains one of Smiths Falls' most recognizable attractions, providing inspiration for artists, photographers and visitors throughout the year.

Tughan's recognition highlights how familiar community landmarks can inspire creative interpretations while encouraging appreciation of the town's natural and historic surroundings.



PHOTO: Jacqueline Marie

Council canadidates from the debate: Marie-Pier Guerin, Bill DIckson, James Creighton, and Alex Brown.

Fifteen candidates competing for six council seats in Oct. 26 election

Smiths Falls voters will choose six councillors from a field of 15 candidates in the October 26 municipal election, with taxes, infrastructure, policing and municipal accountability dominating the campaign.

The candidates are Alex Brown, James Creighton, Bill Dickson, Marie-Pier Guerin, Greg Hull, Lewis Koluk, Spring Loomes, Christopher McGuire, Jennifer Miller, Chance Peterson, Dawn Quinn, Leslie Allison Richardson, Stephen Robinson, Zachary Thoms and Peggy Lee Tye-Bernicky.

All 15 participated in an October 7 all-candidates meeting organized by the Rotary Club of Smiths Falls at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95.

Brown advocates closer scrutiny of municipal debt and spending, while Creighton urges caution over major capital expenditures. Dickson emphasizes attracting businesses to expand the commercial tax base.

Guerin promotes food security, community gardens and accessibility. Hull favours industrial development, grant opportunities and greater communication between municipal departments and residents.

Koluk emphasizes community involvement, youth programs and maintaining responsive local services. Loomes advocates responsible growth, infrastructure maintenance and accessible public spaces.

McGuire identifies aging infrastructure and the need for provincial and federal funding as major challenges. Miller stresses investment in roads, bridges, sewers and recreation facilities while supporting downtown businesses.

Peterson focuses on affordability, housing and ensuring municipal services deliver value for taxpayers. Quinn emphasizes essential spending, infrastructure safety and tourism as an economic driver.

Richardson advocates fiscal responsibility, reviewing municipal policies and ensuring taxpayers receive value for their money. Robinson supports controlled municipal spending and infrastructure improvements consistent with available finances.

Thoms emphasizes improved communication with residents, downtown vacancies and support for the existing municipal police service. Tye-Bernicky identifies road conditions, flooding, physician shortages, homelessness and mental health among her priorities.

One issue dividing candidates is whether Smiths Falls should request a costing from the Ontario Provincial Police to compare with maintaining its municipal police service.

Policing

Several favour examining the financial implications without necessarily supporting a change. Others express concern about response times, community policing and surrendering local control.

Municipal property standards, vacant buildings and enforcement of existing bylaws also emerged as significant concerns, with candidates proposing different approaches to improving neglected properties.

The election will bring changes to council, with Peter McKenna seeking the mayoralty rather than another councillor term and Jay Brennan not running again.

Voting will be conducted exclusively by internet and telephone, and began on Monday at 8:30 a.m., concluding October 26 at 8 p.m.

Dementia Health Hub opens here

The Alzheimer Society of Lanark Leeds Grenville has officially opened its new Dementia Health Hub in Smiths Falls, expanding services for people living with dementia and their families.

The facility, located at 88 Cornelia Street West, Unit A, celebrated its grand opening Oct. 5, providing additional space for programming, health services and respite care.

Executive Director Melinda Coleman said the central location will improve access for residents throughout Lanark, Leeds and Grenville counties.

The expanded facility accommodates the popular Minds in Motion program, which attracts approximately 30 participants weekly, along with an adult day program and caregiver support services.

Four overnight respite beds provide temporary accommodation for people living with dementia, offering much-needed relief for family caregivers. Demand for the service has already produced a waiting list.

The hub also provides offices for seven employees and private meeting areas for families seeking guidance and support.

Mayoralty candidate stories

Cummings pitches experience and his financial leadership **9**

Morris campaigns on accountability, affordability and CAO dismissal **10**

McKenna campaigns on experience and collaboration **11**

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

School Safety

Upper Canada District School Board marks National School Bus Safety Week Oct. 19-23



The Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) is joining schools across Ontario in recognizing National School Bus Safety Week, Oct. 19 to 23, with an emphasis on keeping students safe as they travel to and from school.

The annual awareness campaign reminds motorists, parents, students and school transportation operators that everyone has a responsibility to ensure children arrive at school and return home safely.

School buses remain one of the safest forms of transportation for children, but officials emphasize that particular care is required when students are boarding, leaving or crossing roads near buses.

For communities such as Carleton Place, Almonte, Perth and Smiths Falls, where school buses travel along busy streets, highways and rural roads, the campaign provides a timely reminder about the importance of cautious driving.

Motorists must stop when approaching a school bus displaying flashing red lights or an activated stop arm. On roads without a median, vehicles travelling in both directions must stop and remain stationary until the red lights stop flashing and the stop arm is retracted.

Drivers approaching from behind must stop at least 20 metres away.

Under Ontario law, motorists convicted of illegally passing a stopped school bus face fines ranging from $400 to $2,000 and six demerit points for a first offence. Subsequent offences carry higher penalties.

Students included in campaign

Students are also encouraged to practice safe habits, including arriving at their bus stop early, waiting well back from the roadway and following the driver's instructions.

When leaving the bus, children should never cross behind it. They should cross in front only when it is safe and the driver has signalled them to proceed.

The week also recognizes the important contribution of school bus drivers, who are responsible for transporting students safely through changing traffic, road and weather conditions.

School Bus Driver Appreciation Day will be observed Wednesday, Oct. 21, providing an opportunity for families and school communities to thank drivers for their dedication.

National School Bus Safety Week serves as a reminder that student transportation safety extends beyond the school bus itself.

Whether travelling through residential neighbourhoods, approaching school zones or driving along rural roads, motorists are encouraged to remain alert and exercise extra caution whenever children and school buses are present.

The UCDSB has included National Bus Safety Week in its official school calendar, highlighting the importance of safe transportation throughout the communities it serves.

OPP lays 9,800 charges during Thanksgiving traffic campaign

Ontario Provincial Police officers laid more than 9,800 traffic-related charges across Ontario during the Thanksgiving long weekend as part of a national campaign targeting dangerous driving behaviours.

The four-day enforcement initiative, conducted Oct. 9 to 12, focused on the leading causes of serious and fatal collisions, including speeding, impaired driving, distracted driving and failure to wear seatbelts.

Speeding accounted for the largest number of offences, with officers issuing 4,924 charges during the holiday weekend.

Police also laid 506 seatbelt-related charges, 174 impaired driving charges and 108 distracted driving charges. Thousands of additional charges involved other traffic-related offences.

The enforcement blitz was part of Operation Impact, an annual national road safety campaign led by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.

The initiative brings police services together across Canada to encourage safer driving habits and reduce preventable collisions, injuries and fatalities.

The results highlight continuing concerns about dangerous driving, particularly speeding, which accounted for approximately half the charges laid during the campaign.

Although the Thanksgiving enforcement campaign has concluded, the OPP continues to remind motorists to obey speed limits, avoid distractions, wear seatbelts and never drive while impaired.

Police emphasize that road safety remains a year-round responsibility for all motorists.

Messages to the American readers of the Wall Street Journal



Guest Columnist

by David Leonardo

I have been jousting with the American newspaper readers who leave their comments on stories in the *Wall Street Journal.*

My editorial lance has been selective. Not all of the commenting Americans are Make America Great Again (MAGA) followers of President Donald Trump. Some Americans are actually on the side of Canada and their own threatened economic fortunes.

The participation in the defence of Canada in the comments section of this daily financial newspaper might be a sign that I am now completely a senior citizen. It may also be incomprehensible to some, but I actually write them under my name.

Recently an opinion column said Prime Minister Mark Carney has the wrong strategy of using reciprocal tariffs.

To this academic author I wrote, "Growing up in a tough Montreal neighbourhood I learned in my early life if you give a bully a bloody punch in the nose, in front of classmates, your school years become peaceable."

Another comment given to a MAGA on the negotiations break-down: "Enjoyable to see the misery Pres. Trump is suffering as Canada has the audacity to walk away from the Bully Boy."

Most recently I wrote, "He (Trump) is a drowning man and you can expect desperation in all ways from him."

When PM Carney announced the major pipeline project, Pres. Trump announced one right away for Alaska by the South Koreans. Complete Trump fiction because the deal does not exist.

The post on this is: "Trump is trying to catch up to Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney who is making major infrastructure announcements daily. Today the PM will announce another pipeline from Alberta to the Pacific Ocean. Trump is trying to get back into the spotlight with a "Me Too" campaign.

To a nasty American went this comment: "You sound like a jealous girlfriend. Yes, Canada is doing better than the US." And, "You have proven my statement that many MAGAs are jealous of Canada making a path away from the U.S. The vicious comments prove this. And they should be jealous in that the fortunes of Canada are upward. Too bad about Trump and the U.S. with that sticky problem called Iran."

There is an on-going Trump theme on Canada's military which has trickled down to his devotees to parrot that our country is freeloading on the US for protection.

Several comments were made by me on this: "We don't need to have a large military because Canada is without enemies – except for Trump…… You need a huge military because of all the enemies the U.S. has made in the world. Please understand how difficult it is for Canadians to live beside a nuclear missile target…. The US has gotten off easy because there has never been a need to place a costly military defence on the northern border because of friendly Canada. So, who is the freeloader?"

* * *

Here are many more that I wrote:

"Donald Trump is a blackmailer not a negotiator, which is very much in keeping with his criminality. Further on free trade: "Have you ever heard of this fable: 'The Boy Who Cried Tariffs Too Many Times'"

* * *

"Wonderful to see the wounded MAGA/Trump supporters cry in their beer as Canada begins to seek diversified trade. This is the reality of spurning Canada. What did you think was going to happen? Canadians would bow down to your king as you do?"

* * *

"What it is about: The USA is no longer Top Dog. While Pres. Trump will have us believe that the USA and himself are leading the world — this is now history. This reality is hard for Americans and their president to grasp. This reality, which was on a slow economic descent, has now taken on speed under the leadership of Trump."

* * *

"Here's something you should know about the Canadian persona. We do not need to be the top dog, or lord it over others, which is why the world likes Canadians — especially Europe."

* * *

"I hope Ambassador Hoekstra keeps pummeling Canada, because despite the U.S.-loving Alberta separatists, he's created a national unity unseen in decades. So as Trump's toady, he does have another use. But as a caution – Never Poke the Bear."

* * *

And my favourite comment, "I remember when the U.S. was unpopular in the world because of the Vietnam War. American backpackers would paste a maple leaf on their luggage when bound for Europe to avoid a frosty reception. It appears you have returned to this."

Check headlights and the taillights

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is reminding motorists to make sure that both their headlights and their taillights are on when they are driving at night. At this time of year the lights tend to burn out more quickly. This could from repeated rapid heating when the bulb is on while the cold outside temperatures stresses filaments. Cold + humidity can let moisture into housings causing corrosion on contacts thenflickering or failure.

Under the Ontario Highway Traffic Act, headlights must be on half an hour before sunset to half an hour after sunrise, or any time when weather conditions such as rain or fog prevent a driver from seeing other vehicles or pedestrians clearly at a distance of 150 meters.

Driving at night with running lights on in the front but no taillights is dangerous. Some drivers think a lit-up dashboard means their lights are on, which may not be true. Some cars have fully automatic headlights, others are partially automatic and some are manual.

Never assume that your lighting system is fully automatic. Try testing it out at night while safely in a parking lot or your driveway. Check the owner's manual if you have questions.

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143803

SF police step up traffic watch over Thanksgiving

Smiths Falls Police Service officers were out in force over the Thanksgiving long weekend as part of Operation Impact, a national traffic safety campaign aimed at reducing dangerous driving and preventing collisions.

The enforcement initiative, conducted from Oct. 9 to 12, focused on identifying unsafe driving behaviours, including impaired driving, speeding, distracted driving and failure to wear seatbelts.

According to results released by Smiths Falls police, officers stopped 100 vehicles through Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (R.I.D.E.) roadside checks and conducted another 18 traffic stops during the campaign.

Police issued 10 warnings and laid nine charges for traffic-related offences.

Officers also made 20 alcohol screening demands to determine whether motorists had consumed alcohol before getting behind the wheel.

Operation Impact is an annual national initiative coordinated by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, bringing together police services across Canada to promote safer roads during the busy Thanksgiving holiday period.

The campaign emphasizes enforcement of traffic laws and public awareness of driving behaviours that contribute to serious injuries and fatalities.

Two pedestrians seriously injured in Smiths Falls collision; driver arrested

Two pedestrians were seriously injured after being struck by a vehicle Friday evening, Oct. 16, in Smiths Falls, leading to the arrest of a female driver who allegedly fled the scene.

The Smiths Falls Police Service (SFPS) reported that the collision occurred at approximately 7:56 p.m. at the south end of Empress Avenue.

According to police, a silver Cadillac struck two pedestrians before leaving the roadway and crashing into a residential fence.

The vehicle was subsequently abandoned a short distance from the collision scene, and the female driver allegedly fled on foot in the direction of Parkland Court and Rideau Avenue South.

Both pedestrians sustained serious but non-life-threatening injuries and were transported directly to trauma centres in Ottawa for treatment.

Following an investigation and search of the surrounding neighbourhood, police located and arrested the female driver approximately two hours after the collision.

Police say she is facing several criminal charges and remains in custody pending a bail hearing. Her identity and the specific charges have not yet been released.

Investigators are continuing to reconstruct the circumstances surrounding the collision and are appealing to residents and motorists who may have witnessed the incident or captured relevant footage on security cameras or vehicle dashboard cameras.

Police are particularly interested in surveillance footage from several locations in Smiths Falls during specific periods Friday evening.

These include the south ends of Empress Avenue and Sussex Street between 7 and 9 p.m., Parkland Court and Rideau Avenue South at Lorne Street between 7:30 and 9 p.m., and Daniel Street at Elmsley Street and Ogden Avenue between Beckwith and Daniel streets from 8 to 10:30 p.m.

Investigators are also requesting footage from Kenzington Avenue and the intersection of Jasper Avenue and Beech Street between 4 and 7 p.m., several hours before the collision.

Police have not indicated whether speed, impairment or other factors contributed to the incident.

The investigation remains ongoing, and police say additional information will be released as it becomes available.

Anyone who witnessed the collision, observed suspicious activity or has security or dashboard camera footage from the identified areas is asked to contact the Smiths Falls Police Service at 613-283-0357.

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Our History

Apples were loved as much by pioneers as we do today



BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON

With an abundance of ripe delicious produce available all year at our local grocery stores, it may be difficult to imagine a time when our pioneer ancestors considered fruit to be a luxury, enjoyed fresh only while in season.

For the early 19th century families in Lanark County preserving the autumn apple harvest was often a matter of survival. Producing a crop of apples meant clearing dense forests, then an added challenge of planting seeds in rocky soil. Settlers who transported European apple seeds with them soon learned that varieties grown in more moderate climates could not survive the brutal Eastern Ontario winters.

In some regions of the county nearly a decade of trial and error was required to determine the types of trees that could survive without succumbing to winter-kill.

Harvested at their peak through September and October, certain late season varieties like the Northern Spy kept well and were stored whole. Individual apples were packed carefully into wooden bins or barrels lined with sawdust, or clean straw, cushioning the fruit against bruising.

The Lanark Greening, a hard variety cultivated in the late 1800s by Robert Anderson, a settler in Fallbrook, could also be kept in cold root cellars lasting well into the harsh winter.

One of the most notable local apples, with a proud history in Ontario, is the McIntosh, discovered in 1811, by pioneer, John McIntosh, while clearing his land in Dundela, between Brockville and Cornwall. McIntosh, along with his son, Allan, applied the science of tree grafting, to propagate these apple trees on a large scale. This variety spread quickly across Ontario and was noted by the Dominion of Canada's chief horticulturalist: "needed no words of praise, it is one of the finest appearing and best dessert apples grown."

In many pioneer log homes, the fresh whole apples were stored in tiny unheated spaces beneath the roof. More common were the cold cellars, typically built on a north-facing slope to minimize direct sunlight, with a two-door system to act as insulation from the cold. With only a limited number of varieties suitable for storing whole, most didn't keep well and were preserved by drying, canning, or fermenting into hard cider, or cider vinegar.

Drying apples was the most common way to preserve the fruit through the winter, removing the moisture, reducing their weight and making them easier to store. Rural communities often gathered for autumn paring bees. Young lads operated hand-cranked apple parers, while women cored, sliced the fruit into thin wedges, then strung the pieces on long threads over ceiling beams, or over the open hearth to dry.

The dried slices were stored in cloth bags, then rehydrated with boiling water during the winter months, for sauces, stews and pies.

The early settlers did not believe in wasting anything so apples that were bruised or dropped from the tree were pressed in wooden cider presses. The cider mills ranged from small hand-crank units to larger machines powered by a horse or an ox walking in a circle. The bruised apples were dumped into the press and heavy wooden rollers crushed the fruit into a wet mash.

The thick mashed fruit was transferred to a wooden screw-press, extracting the juice, which was filtered through cheese-cloth, before flowing into a wooden bucket. The remaining pulp was fed to the pigs and cattle.

While some of the juice extracted was consumed as sweet cider, most was poured into clean oak barrels and rolled into the dark root cellar. The barrels were left uncorked for several weeks to let the gas escape, and once the bubbling ceased, the barrels were sealed and left. Within weeks, a crisp alcoholic cider was ready, and would keep throughout the entire winter.

The humble Eastern Ontario apple, a staple in our modern diets, was a key element providing nutrition for our hard-working pioneer settlers. Whether stored whole, dried, or pressed into cider, the apple was an essential source of vitamins and minerals in those early diets consisting largely of meat and grains.

As for the legacy of one of our hardy local favourites, the Historic Sites and Monument Board of Canada installed a plaque in 2001, in the village of Dundela, Ontario, to commemorate the discovery of the McIntosh apple.

* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

In Smiths Falls mayoral race

Cummings pitches experience and financial leadership

Christopher Cummings is campaigning to become the next mayor of Smiths Falls on a platform emphasizing financial responsibility, economic development, support for local businesses and experienced municipal leadership.

Cummings, who served three consecutive terms on town council from 2006 to 2018, faces Peter McKenna and Nate Morris in the Oct. 26 municipal election. Mayor Shawn Pankow is not seeking another term.

A former business banker and financial adviser, Cummings currently serves as chair of the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario. He believes his financial background, knowledge of municipal government and experience dealing with economic challenges make him well-equipped to lead the town.

"I want to be Mayor because I care deeply about Smiths Falls," Cummings said. "I believe my experience can help our community deal with the economic problems we face today and prepare for the major challenges ahead."

During his earlier years on council, Smiths Falls faced significant economic setbacks, including the departure of major employers Hershey and Stanley Tools and the closure of the Rideau Regional Centre.

Those experiences, he says, demonstrated the importance of cooperation among municipal government, businesses and community organizations in rebuilding the local economy.

"No one person turned the town around," Cummings said. "It took a lot of people pulling in the same direction."

His campaign priorities include supporting existing employers, attracting new investment, diversifying the local economy and controlling municipal expenditures.

Cummings proposes visiting every business in Smiths Falls and maintaining regular contact with employers to identify problems associated with tariffs, supply-chain disruptions and rising operating costs.

"We cannot control a trade war," he said. "We can support our existing businesses, attract new employers and reduce our dependence on any one company or industry."

Cummings has also taken a position against using Ontario's Strong Mayor Powers to override council decisions.

Smiths Falls received the additional mayoral authorities on May 1, 2025, giving the mayor expanded powers over budgets, municipal administration and certain provincial priorities.

Seeks dialogue

However, Cummings believes disagreements among the seven elected members of council should be resolved through discussion, better information and cooperation rather than unilateral decisions.

On municipal drinking water, he maintains that the town's treated water is safe, based on provincial testing requirements and professional oversight.

He also acknowledges residents' concerns, emphasizing their right to receive clear answers supported by verified information.

"People have a right to ask questions about their drinking water," he said.

Describing his candidacy as offering "change with experience," Cummings says his objective is to put his financial knowledge and public service background to work for the community.

Internet and telephone voting begins Oct. 19 at 8:30 a.m. and concludes Oct. 26 at 8 p.m.



PHOTO: Jacqueline Marie

AT THE END of the mayoralty debate candidate Peter McKenna (left) shakes Christopher Cummings' hand in friendship.

Bellamy Farm project adds more housing for Phase 3

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

For the second time this year, Smiths Falls town council has approved a bylaw that lays the groundwork for further development of Phase III of the Bellamy Farm Subdivision.

The ordinance, given the thumbs-up during the October 13 committee of the whole meeting, "lifts the part lot control provisions of the (Ontario) Planning Act to allow the division of three more blocks" in the subdivision, "to allow the freehold occupancy of the units," according to the Town's Manager of Development Services Karl Grenke.

"Upon its (the bylaw's) completion and registration, it would allow the finalization of 14 new townhouse units. And this hopefully will not be the last part lot control that we bring (to council). We will continue bringing these forward as they move through the system," he added.

During the April 7 regular council meeting, Smiths Falls council passed a bylaw permitting the lifting of part lot control to allow the division of two blocks of Phase III into four separate "freehold lots," enabling "two, four-unit townhouses to be (built and) sold."

Phase 1, comprising the extension of Ferrara Drive and southern stub of Staples Boulevard, was registered in late 2018.

In June 2022, council approved a subdivision agreement for the first phase of this extended subdivision, described as Bellamy Farm Phase II, and comprising of the extension of Staples Boulevard, upgrading of Broadview Avenue West and development of Whitcomb and Maragaret Graham roads.

Phase III, which includes construction of two new public streets (Doctor Agnes Craine Drive and Mansfield Terrace), received final approval from town council in 2025.

Once completed, the subdivision will consist of 385 housing units – 63 bungalows and townhouses that were built in Phase I, an additional 166 semi-detached homes and townhouses constructed in Phase II, and 156 townhouses that are slated to be built in Phase III.

Will use Strong Mayor Powers

Morris campaigns on accountability, affordability and a dismissal of CAO

Smiths Falls mayoralty candidate Nathaniel (Nate) Morris is promising a major shakeup at Town Hall, greater accountability in municipal spending and renewed attention to drinking water, housing affordability and community safety if elected Oct. 26.

Morris, who has lived in downtown Smiths Falls for nearly a decade and is challenging Christopher Cummings and Peter McKenna for the mayor's chair. Incumbent Mayor Shawn Pankow is not seeking re-election.

His campaign is built around six priorities and 10 specific commitments, emphasizing measurable improvements in municipal services, more affordable living and greater transparency in local government.

One of his most controversial promises is to replace Chief Administrative Officer Malcolm Morris, who is unrelated to the candidate.

Many in social media, not just opponents, are calling this a personal vendetta.

Morris says he would use Ontario's Strong Mayor Powers to initiate the change within his first 100 days, arguing that voters deserve an opportunity to decide whether new administrative leadership is necessary.

"I have been clear that replacing the CAO is the one circumstance in which I intend to use those powers," Morris said, adding that he otherwise favours governing through council consensus.

The proposal could create significant severance or legal costs for the municipality, depending on employment obligations and the circumstances of dismissal. He refutes the cost saying this would be a hypothetical situation of the CAO reacting to an unjust dismissal with a lawyer.

Drinking water campaign

Drinking water has emerged as another central campaign issue which has caused the Town to reassure citizens several times of the safety now and before. This has been backed up by provincial statements which have passed the Town's water as safe and potable.

Even so, on Sept. 14, Morris released allegations concerning the handling of 2024 environmental testing at a municipal property within a Drinking Water Intake Protection Zone.

He contends that information about lead and petroleum hydrocarbon contamination was not promptly disclosed to appropriate authorities.

His allegations do not establish that contaminated drinking water reached residents, and CAO Malcolm Morris has strongly rejected the claims.



MAYORALTY candidate Nathaniel (Nate) Morris campaign photo.

The candidate also wants remaining lead service lines identified and replaced while reducing unnecessary consulting expenditures to help control water bills.

Parts of his platform are already being done by the Town.

On municipal finances, Morris proposes performance-based budgeting, requiring departments to establish spending objectives and measurable results before additional expenditures are approved. Measures which are already a part of Town operations, say opponents.

His housing proposals include streamlining building permits, removing unnecessary administrative delays and supporting more affordable residential development. This has already happened with the break-through at the Bellamy Farm project.

Police cost review

Morris also advocates reviewing police spending, strengthening civilian oversight and improving the consistency of municipal by-law enforcement. The Police Services Board meets regularly to do this say past and present members.

Youth recreation features prominently in his campaign, with proposals to expand affordable programming and provide more opportunities for young people. But the Town and associated agencies already have this programming.

His environmental priorities include revitalizing the Rideau Canal waterfront, protecting water quality and pursuing practical climate initiatives that also reduce costs.

He additionally supports advocating for a guaranteed basic income pilot, which opponents say is best left to other levels of government with the resources to do so.

Morris is presenting his candidacy as an opportunity for significant change, and allowing him to pursue a targeted dismissal of the CAO.

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Plus collaboration and a community-first approach

McKenna campaigns on his experience

Smiths Falls mayoralty candidate Peter McKenna is campaigning on a platform of experienced leadership, responsible financial management and a commitment to improving the quality of life for residents as the town prepares to elect a new mayor Oct. 26.

McKenna, who has served eight years on council, faces Christopher Cummings and Nate Morris in the contest to succeed outgoing Mayor Shawn Pankow.

With more than 30 years of experience in health and community services, including managing employees and organizational budgets of up to $20 million, McKenna believes he brings the administrative experience and community knowledge necessary to guide the municipality.

"Smiths Falls has been home for most of my life, and my involvement in this community began long before I was elected to Council," McKenna said.

He recalls collecting signatures at age 15 in support of affordable housing, an initiative that helped bring the Empress Avenue social housing development forward. His family became among its first residents.

That experience, he says, demonstrated how municipal decisions can directly improve people's lives.

McKenna's campaign outlines six priorities: community advocacy, collaborative leadership, financial planning, recreation, infrastructure renewal and economic development.

Affordable housing is among his principal concerns. He points to more than 800 housing units constructed during his eight years on council, including affordable and rent-geared-to-income housing.

He wants to continue working with Lanark County and senior governments to expand affordable housing, improve access to child care and strengthen services for seniors, families and vulnerable residents.



CANDIDATE Peter Mckenna (right) encounters a supporter.

"I believe the best leadership is collaborative leadership," McKenna says, emphasizing respectful relationships among council, municipal staff, residents, businesses and community organizations.

Town finances

On municipal finances, McKenna supports responsible budgeting, long-term financial planning and pursuing provincial and federal funding to reduce pressure on local taxpayers.

He points to more than $100 million in infrastructure improvements undertaken in Smiths Falls over the past six years, supported partly by government funding.

Maintaining roads, water and wastewater systems and public facilities will remain important as the community grows.

McKenna also supports advancing the proposed Regional Recreation Facility and continuing improvements to Lower Reach Park, trails, waterfront areas and other public spaces.

On economic development, he wants to support existing employers, encourage investment, expand employment lands and strengthen downtown businesses through the town's Business Retention and Expansion strategy.

Health-care access also remains a priority, reflecting his professional background and longstanding involvement with community services.

Throughout his campaign, McKenna has emphasized balancing growth and infrastructure investment with protection of neighbourhoods, heritage buildings, green space and the waterfront.

"Smiths Falls is more than budgets, buildings and infrastructure," McKenna said. "Its beating heart is its people."

He describes his proposed leadership as experienced, steady and compassionate, promising to listen carefully, build partnerships and plan for the community's future.

ELECTION COVERAGE

Only the Smiths Falls Record-Journal has complete town election coverage. Be sure to get your copy every week from newsstands everywhere in the town.

Smiths Falls Record Journal

Downtown to come alive with Halloween Skele-Bration Oct. 24

Downtown Smiths Falls will be filled with ghosts, goblins, witches and superheroes on Saturday, Oct. 24, as the popular Skele-Bration Halloween celebration returns for another morning of family fun.

The annual event, running from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., invites children and families to dress in their favourite Halloween costumes and enjoy a festive morning of trick-or-treating at participating downtown businesses.

The celebration begins at 10 a.m. with the Skele-Bration Costume Parade, gathering at the Town Hall Bandstand at 77 Beckwith St. N. Youngsters and their families are encouraged to show off their costumes before heading into the downtown shopping district in search of Halloween treats.

Following the parade, participating merchants will welcome costumed visitors and distribute candy until 1 p.m., or while supplies last.

To help families identify participating businesses, organizers are asking trick-or-treaters to watch for candy corn signs displayed in downtown storefront windows. Each sign indicates another location where children can stop and collect treats.

The event offers youngsters an additional opportunity to wear their Halloween costumes and fill their candy bags ahead of the traditional Oct. 31 festivities.

Skele-Bration also provides an opportunity for families to explore the downtown shopping district, visit local merchants and enjoy the community atmosphere.

Families are encouraged to bring their costumes, candy bags and Halloween spirit for a morning of seasonal fun.

The celebration takes place Saturday, Oct. 24, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., beginning at the Town Hall Bandstand on Beckwith Street North.



Smiths Falls police respond to 682 calls for service in September

Officers make 39 arrests, lay 96 criminal charges, make 30 intimate partner violence calls

The Smiths Falls Police Service responded to 682 calls for service during September, making 39 arrests and laying 96 criminal charges, according to the department's latest monthly statistics.

The figures provide a snapshot of police activity in the community, highlighting the demands placed on officers through criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, mental health incidents and community policing initiatives.

Among the more significant figures were 37 calls related to mental health concerns and 30 calls involving intimate partner violence.

Together, these two categories accounted for 67 calls for service during the month, illustrating the continuing demands on police to respond to situations involving vulnerable individuals and domestic disputes.

Traffic enforcement also remained a priority, with officers conducting 78 proactive traffic stops and laying 24 traffic-related charges.

The figures reflect efforts to identify unsafe driving behaviour and maintain road safety throughout the municipality.

Beyond responding to emergencies and investigating criminal activity, the police service continued its community policing initiatives.

Officers recorded 16 hours of foot patrols and another 16 hours of bicycle patrols, providing a visible police presence in neighbourhoods and public areas.

An additional 54 hours were devoted to community service activities, bringing the combined total for foot patrols, bicycle patrols and community service to 86 hours during September.

The monthly report also illustrates the broad range of responsibilities handled by municipal police officers, extending beyond criminal investigations to include public safety, traffic enforcement, community engagement and assistance to residents experiencing personal crises.

The 96 criminal charges arising during the month represent an average of more than three charges per day, while the 682 calls for service amount to approximately 23 daily requests for police assistance.

Your Health

Are your cortisol levels too high?

Cortisol, the stress hormone, is essential for many everyday functions. It helps regulate your body's stress response, blood sugar, metabolism, inflammation and even your sleep-wake cycle. It surges during times of high stress to get your body ready for the "fight or flight" response, which can create problems when it occurs too frequently, and without the follow-up of physical action. Chronically high cortisol levels are a biomarker for a number of diseases, including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and other metabolic and inflammatory conditions.

While the only way to know if you have high cortisol levels is to have a laboratory test, there are certain signs you should look out for.

If you have trouble falling asleep at night or tend to wake up in the middle of the night and can't fall back asleep, it could have something to do with your stress hormones.

Left unaddressed, poor sleep quality and short duration can lead to a number of health concerns, including an increased risk of heart disease. Another sign is extra weight around your midsection, despite no changes in your diet or exercise routines, since cortisol promotes fat storage, especially around the abdomen. Elevated cortisol can make you feel mentally alert even when you're physically exhausted. High levels of cortisol, maintained over long periods, are associated with reduced cognitive function and impaired sleep.

To reduce high cortisol levels, follow an anti-inflammatory diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids, colorful fruits and vegetables and fiber-rich legumes. Stabilizing blood sugar through regular meals with protein, fat and fiber can calm both inflammation and cortisol spikes.

Managing your mental, emotional and physical stress with adequate rest and prioritizing mental health and self-care activities can help reduce stress and inflammation. Research supports the use of mindfulness, meditation and relaxation interventions as effective ways to manage and lower cortisol levels.



Eat frozen to become healthier

Dieticians recommend stocking up on single-ingredient frozen foods to save money, time and add nutrition to meals. Frozen fruits, vegetables and legumes can support a healthy gut: try frozen edamame, berries, broccoli, onions, peas and carrots for gut-healthy benefits. Edamame is a soybean which has 8 grams of fiber per cup and is also rich in plant protein (18 grams per cup). Berries contain antioxidants called polyphenols that help reduce intestinal inflammation and promote a strong, healthy gut barrier. Because frozen berries are flash-frozen at the time of harvest, their nutrients are locked in and preserved.

Broccoli, a cruciferous vegetable is a great source of fiber (6 grams per cooked cup) and contains phytonutrients, including glucosinolates, which can be metabolized by the microbes in your GI tract. Onions are a rich source of fructans, which include a prebiotic fiber called inulin. This prebiotic helps your good gut bacteria grow and thrive, which can promote smoother digestion, ease bloating and even strengthen your immune system. Peas give you plant protein; carrots supply prebiotic fibers, and have 5 grams of fiber per cooked cup.

Researchers are saying infectious diseases are linked to cancer

A new study published in The Lancet Oncology says that a 2.3 million new cancer cases around the world in 2024, namely 12% of all new cancer cases, can be attributed to infectious diseases. An estimated 760,000 or 4% of all cancer cases in 2024 could be traced back to the stomach bug Helicobacter pylori. It spreads through contact with an contaminated surfaces, food and water. The long term inflammation can damage cells, leading to stomach cancer. To avoid H. pylori, wash your hands and eat food that's been prepared and cooked in a clean space.

Human papillomavirus (HPV), which causes almost all cervical cancers, accounts for 750,000 new cancer cases globally. There is a very effective vaccine that protects against 90% of HPV cancers, but it must be administered on time. Young adults up to age 26 who haven't yet gotten it should do so as soon as possible.

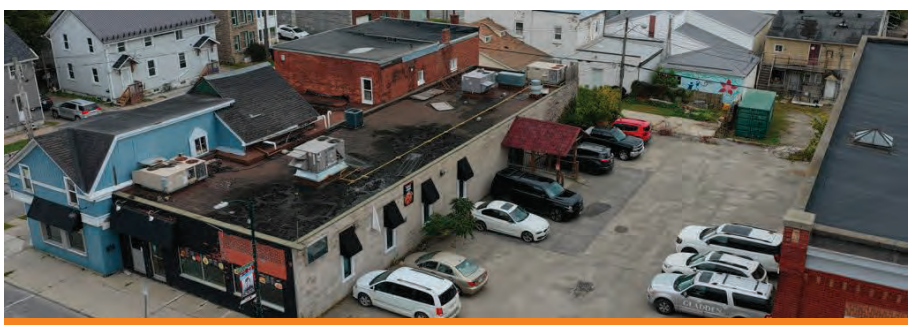
An estimated 360,000 cases of cancer (2%) of new cases can be attributed to the liver infection hepatitis B. Most hepatitis B infections are short, but when it lasts more than six months, it becomes chronic and raises risk of liver cancer, liver failure and serious scarring of the liver (cirrhosis). Like HPV, there's a highly affective hepatitis B vaccine available. About 160,000 cases (less than 1%) of cancer cases can be attributed to hepatitis C. This virus spreads through infected blood, often shared needles, potentially causing serious liver damage that leads to cancer. There is no vaccine available for this virus, but it is curable with medication.

About 260,000 cases of cancer (1%) can be attributed to the Epstein-Barr virus (VEB), the main cause of mononucleosis also known as "the kissing disease." EBV can increase risk of getting cancer of the upper throat (nasopharyngeal cancer); it has also been linked to lymphoma and stomach cancer. It spreads through bodily fluids, primarily saliva.

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SMOKE & MIRRORS

BY JOHN KENNY
DIRECTED BY JANE STOTT
Produced by
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October 31st & November 1st 2026 at 2:00pm

Both plays are presented by special arrangement with the authors

Poster Credit: Marissa Barry

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For safety and traffic flow

Four streets will undergo a multi-million dollar redesign

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL

Smiths Falls town council approved a major redesign of the Beckwith Street, Lombard Street, Brockville Street and Jasper Avenue intersection during the October 5 council meeting.

Council made its decision after receiving the Intersection Study and Functional Design report – prepared by Aurora, Ont.-based Elements Engineering Inc. through TSI Inc., of Kingston, Ont. – during the immediately preceding committee of the whole meeting.

According to a staff report prepared by the Town's Director of Public Works and Utilities Paul McMunn, "Elements Engineering was retained by TSI Inc., on behalf of the Town… to screen options and identify a technically preferred alternative" for improving one of the town's busiest intersections after municipal staff, "raised pedestrian safety and accessibility concerns, in particular the southbound right-turn channelization and pedestrian options" at the crossing.

Council ultimately approved the consultants' "technically preferred design," a plan that includes removal of the junction's existing southbound channelized right-turn lane, realignment of all four approaches to the intersection and its centre medians, upgrading of traffic signals, improved intersection geometry, accommodations for heavy vehicles, and provisions for future cycling infrastructure.

After council heard from the Smiths Falls Accessibility Advisory Committee earlier this year about its concerns regarding the intersection, the consultants also incorporated a number of accessibility-related improvements into the remediation design, notably pedestrian push buttons, audible pedestrian signals and other AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)-compliant features.

McMunn stated that the chosen design alternative was recommended by Town staff as the "preferred solution for advancing accessibility, pedestrian safety, active transportation opportunities, traffic operations, and overall intersection functionality."

Council also directed staff to engage TSI Inc. to prepare and submit a Change Order Request (COR) outlining the scope and associated engineering costs required to advance" the "technically preferred alternative" for the intersection "to the detailed design stage, with that proposal to be presented to council for future consideration."

During presentation of the Intersection Study and Functional Design study, Tom Gryz, Senior Traffic/Transportation Engineer with Elements Engineering Inc., stated that an initial (Class-D) estimate for the "technically preferred" intersection improvement option was $2.07 million, subject to change.

"Keep in mind that this is a Class-D estimate…and that the consultant who gets the detailed design will have to refine that (cost) once that's awarded," said Gryz.

The Beckwith Street/Lombard Street/Brockville Street/Jasper Avenue intersection improvement initiative will complement the Rideau Canal Bridges Rehabilitation Project for which council approved a pair of contracts – totalling more than $6.2 million – during the September 14 committee of the whole meeting.

First tender

The first tender, for the construction work, was awarded to North York, Ont.-based KB Civil Constructors Inc., in the amount of $5,486,602.66 (including net HST), while an award for contract administration and inspection services – to an upset limit of $735,114.24 (including net HST) – went to TSI Inc.

The Canal Bridges project includes the rehabilitation of the New Lock Bridge, similar work on the pedestrian underpass bridge, and some upgrades to the Beckwith Street, Lombard Street, Brockville Street and Jasper Avenue intersection, including improvements to street lighting infrastructure.

Ninety percent of the total cost of that work is funded through a grant received from Intake 11 of the Ministry of Transportation-administered Connecting Links Program, while the Town is on the hook for the remaining 10 percent, which translates to the Province paying approximately $6.6 million and the Town just under $735,000.

The municipality's share is being drawn from the Town's capital reserve fund.

Work on the Beckwith Street bridges is expected to begin soon.

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THOMPSON
Glen

AUG. 22, 1934 – SEPT. 13, 2026

It is with great sadness that the family of Glen Thompson announce his passing at the Lanark Lodge in Perth on September 13 2026, at the age of 92. He will be missed by his late wife Beth, and their two sons Paul (Cory) and Peter (Maggie). He will be deeply missed by his grandchildren Riley (Samantha), Brayden (Emily), Jared and Madison and also his great-grandchildren Brayden, Reid, Shaelee and Karter. He will be lovingly remembered by his sister Gail (late Bob) Drummond, his many nieces and nephews, extended family, neighbours, and friends.

We would like to thank all of those who paid their respects at the visitation and funeral service. We would like to thank Rev. Don McLean for officiating the service, Dave Harry for the wonderful eulogy, and to the pall bearers, Blair and Sons Funeral Home and those who made donations to the Perth & Smiths Falls District Hospital – Perth Site or the Lanark-Balderson Pastoral Charge.

Glen was provided exceptional care during his extended stay at the Perth Hospital, the second-floor staff were amazing, Thank you! He also received great care for his short time at the Lanark Lodge – Evergreens Unit, Thank you.

Glen lived a great life, being a dairy farmer. He was a wonderful brother, husband, father, father-in-Law, Grandfather, Great-Grandfather, and above all he was a great person. His sense of humour, his stories and that smile will forever be missed, but the memories will last a lifetime.

— The Thompson Family

OBITUARIES



TUEPAH
Alice Geertje (Sels)

NOV. 24, 1945 – OCT. 14, 2026

Alice was born in the Netherlands on Nov. 24, 1945. She passed away peacefully on Oct. 14, 2026 at the Smiths Falls Hospital. She was predeceased by her husband Patrick Tuepah and her treasured daughter Kimberlee Playfair an her father John Playfair. Alice was the daughter of Jasper and Gerrie Sels. She was the much loved sister of Albert Sels (Gretta), Gerda Van Wingerden (Isaac), Anne Bolton (Len), John Sels (Kathy) and Frank Sels (Vickie). Loved stepmom to Patrick Tuepah (Lori) and Pamela Rizzo (Pat). Loved Oma to Alexandria and Anna Rizzo. She will be greatly missed by her many nephews and nieces and her great nephews and nieces as well as her many friends who were fortunate to have known her and enjoyed her contagious laugh and her loving and giving nature.

Friends were invited to visit with the family at the Anglican Parish of Kitley, (Newbliss), 626 Line Road 4, Elizabethtown-Kitley on Friday, October 16, 2026 from 10:00 A.M. until the time of the Service at 11:00 A.M. A reception followed in the church hall. Interment at Pine Grove Cemetery, Lanark.

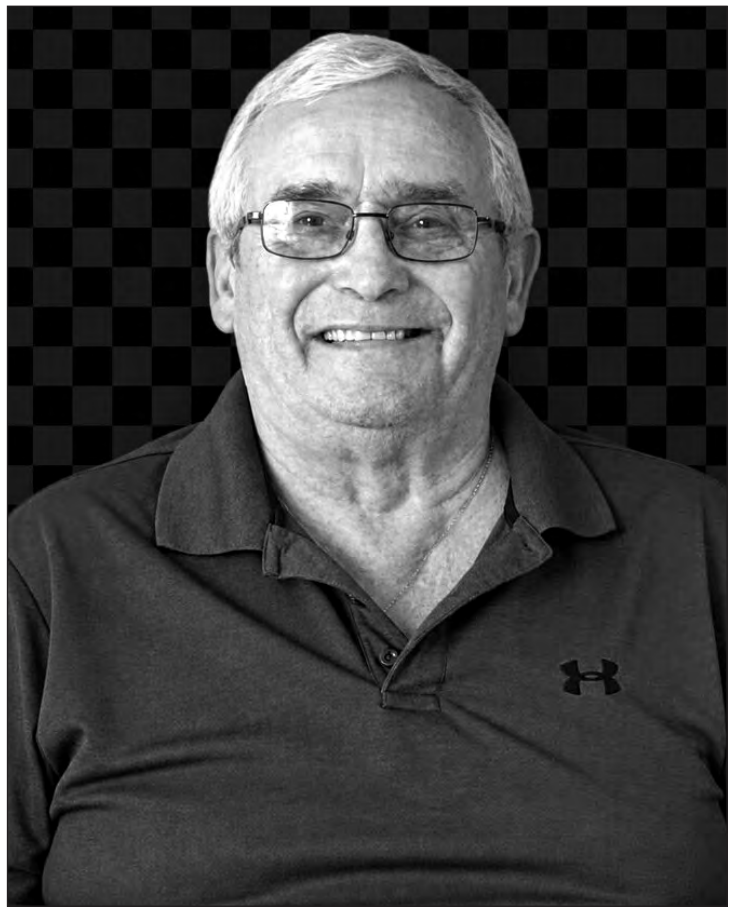
Donations to the Anglican Parish of Kitley https://kitleyanglicans.weebly.com/donate.html or the Hopewell Eating Disorder Support Centre (info@hopewell.ca) would be greatly appreciated.

Arrangements are in the care of Blair & Son Funeral Directors, Perth.

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For condolences or further information, visit our website:
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HODGE
R. Gilbert "Gib"

SEPTEMBER 10, 1942 – OCTOBER 9, 2026



It is with profound sadness that the family of Gilbert "Gib" Hodge announces his passing on October 9, 2026, at the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital. A beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, and friend, Gib leaves behind a legacy of kindness, generosity, and selfless community service.

Born September 10, 1942, to the late Clarence and Winnifred Hodge, Gib devoted his life to helping others. At the centre of his world was his beloved wife, the late Carron Hodge (nee Code), his partner and love for 63 wonderful years. Carron predeceased Gib by just three months. Together, they built a loving family that was his greatest pride and joy.

Gib was a devoted father to David (Shauna) and Steven (Raynee), cherished Poppa to Katrina, Skylar, Lara, Luke, and Grayson, and proud great-grandfather to Daynen, Macen, Rory, and Kyce. He was a loving brother to Ronnie Hodge (the late Louella), the late Judy Hyland (Ron), and Sue Carroll (Glenn). He will also be fondly remembered by his many nieces, nephews, extended family, and dear friends.

Gib worked as a grocery store manager and night leader for over 40 years and part-time at the Beer Store after retiring. His commitment to community service was extraordinary. For 58 years, he served the Smiths Falls Civitan Club in numerous positions and was elected Civitan's International Region 5 Director. Among his many honours were Civitan of the Year, Citizen of the Year for the town of Smiths Falls, and both club and district honour keys, the highest honour an individual Civitan member can receive. He also established the Sam Wilson Medical Bank at the Smiths Falls Civitan Club, which continues to serve the community.

Gib volunteered with the Smiths Falls Community Food Bank for more than 20 years, serving on its Board of Directors as both director and treasurer. His faith was equally important. As an active member of Westminster Presbyterian Church, he volunteered in many capacities, including preparing church dinners. He also helped prepare the much-loved Festival of Trees Christmas dinners at the Civitan.

Known affectionately as "Bingo Gibby," Gib brought joy to countless people by calling Bingo at the Civitan Club and broadcasting locally on television and radio. Even at Broadview Nursing Home, he eagerly anticipated every game, often returning to his room with pockets full of quarters from his winnings.

Gib will be deeply missed by his family, Civitan and church families, and the countless friends and community members whose lives he touched. His kindness, compassion, and dedication made a lasting difference, and his legacy will live on in all those he helped.

Rest peacefully, Gib. You gave so much, loved so deeply, and left this world better than you found it.

A Celebration of Life was held at the Smiths Falls Civitan Club on Saturday, October 17, 2026.

Arrangements are in the care of Blair & Son Funeral Directors, Smiths Falls.

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Smiths Falls
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Condolences or for further information please visit:
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OBITUARIES

COOKE
Jean Ann (nee Gallagher)

NOVEMBER 28, 1937 – OCTOBER 7, 2026



Jean made her final journey at her home on the shores of Bobs Lake with her family around her on October 7th 2026. She was the middle child of the five children born to Jean and Lloyd Gallagher on November 28th 1937. She is pre-deceased by her older brother Bob Gallagher and younger sister Nancy Carere and deeply missed by her oldest and youngest sisters Mary Ferris and Katy Young.

For Jean her family of five, Justyna and Bob Lawrence, Michael and Diane Cooke, Mark (and Nancy deceased) and Martine Dumas, and twins Derek and Julie Cooke and Mari and John Dressler, mattered above all else. She and her husband Theodore 'Derek' of 67 years have fourteen Grandchildren: (Ifer, Kathryn (Nathan), Robin (Kyle), Jacob (Jessie), Lillian, Kristen (Julius), Ivan (Margaret), Colin (Allie), Theo (Janelle), Nathan (Iris), Sara, Caroline, Bramm, and Keenan) and seven Great Grandchildren. They, with all her other relatives, embrace her and will forever have her with them in their hearts. Jean loved the outdoors and all it has to offer. She loved being immersed in a lakeside forest alone for days, to embrace the surroundings whatever the weathers. Watching and knowing the wide variety of birds around our feeders and at the lake became an all important part of our daily breakfasts and could last for hours.

She relished her encounters with people, old or new, making each feel special. She loved to talk and especially to relate stories. She became deeply involved with the Theater backstage, initially with DRAG (Desert Rose Acting Guild) in Riyadh, KSA, then for years at Studio Theatre in Perth. She willingly supported her community for many years serving, always with humour, on the executive at the ABC Hall at Bolingbroke. Her humour was ready at all times, enlightening even serious moments. It added asense of 'fun' to the event and made her participation richly welcomed.

Her weakness for chocolate was legend and she especially liked Cadburys Dairy milk, even more so when it had come from the UK. This weakness was complimented by her baking skills. Her desserts were to 'die for' and the plentiful contributions to local gatherings, never returned with any left-overs.

Her first venture into the world of writing was to write a cook book that focused on desserts. It was aptly entitled 'My Sweet Moments'. Each copy was created by hand with colour coded pages. She gave one to each for her children and grandchildren. It carries its own special history in the family. Then, in her 80s she decided to write about and for her family; its history and her memories of growing up, mainly in London. To that she added a range of stories of her experiences and encounters of times she accompanied her husband, (a busy academic 'never at home' surgeon) on many trips abroad. Her book 'Riding the Waves. The Unexpected stories of my life', was self-published in the fall of 2024.

She was not competitive in nature, yet an excellent swimmer, skater and good at gymnastics. Many of these skills were honed at camp Indewendewin, where she taught swimming and canoeing as a counselor. It is no wonder that her progeny are proficient in these skills in and on the water.

Jean's ways were different. It did not matter for her to be 'up with the Joneses'. So her housekeeping was done around 'Organized Confusion' and prioritized by how much fun she could have with her children. She never aspired to the role and expectations of being 'A Doctor's wife'. Yet her support for her husband's work never wavered. Her attention to detail and capacity to create complex set ups in short form, illustrated by: The 'Bibles' she put together for organizing props and actors backstage for each new play; the arrangements for a curling bonspiel; set ups for our next camping trip; organizing another 'Crazy Dinner', was excellent. It was an unique talent. Importantly, her ways were always those of putting the needs of others ahead of her own. Those were the tenets she lived by and ranked far and always ahead of any personal problems or physical distress.

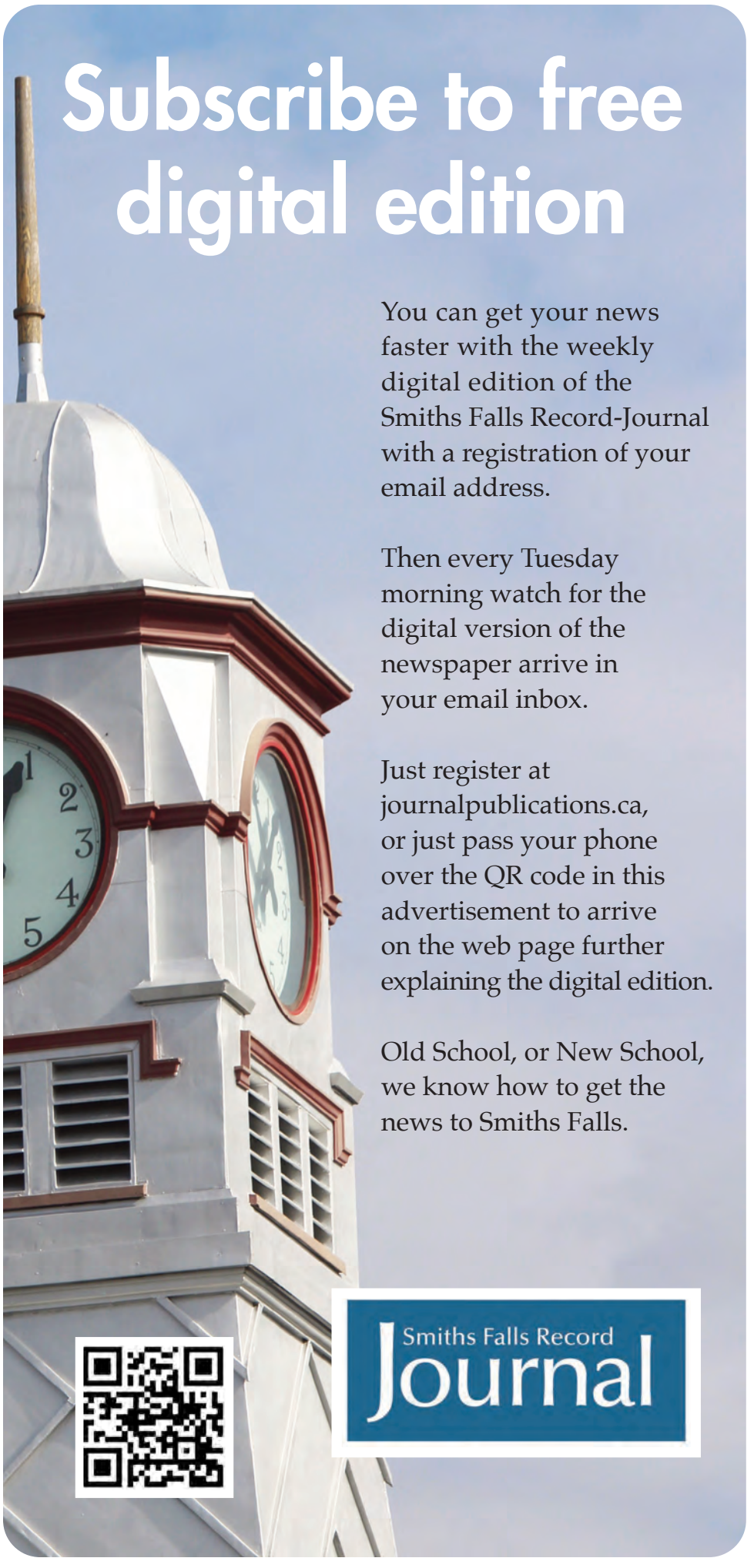
Jean will be deeply missed by all who knew her and cherished by all who cared. A celebration of her life will be held on October 24th from 2:00pm to 4:00pm at Blair & Son Funeral Home, Perth. As expressions of sympathy, memorial contributions to TheBob's Lake Foundation or the ABC community Hall, Maberly would be greatly appreciated. Arrangements are in the care of Blair & Son Funeral Home, Perth.

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For condolences or further information, visit our website:
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Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of an obituary in this newspaper. Or, you can call us directly at 514 503-1593.

Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.



News from our neighbours

Belleville subdivision plan to surround the Black Bear Ridge golf

BELLEVILLE: A major first phase of the proposed Black Bear Ridge Village development is moving closer to approval after Belleville's Planning Advisory Committee endorsed a draft subdivision plan Monday.

The proposal covers lands at 501 Harmony Road near Holman Road in Thurlow Ward 2 and forms part of a larger 370-hectare resort community planned around the Black Bear Ridge Golf Course.

The phase-one application by The Biglieri Group calls for 552 residential units, including 258 single-detached homes, 38 townhouses and 256 apartment units within mixed-use buildings that would also contain commercial space.

The committee recommended the subdivision plan proceed to Belleville city council for consideration.

The broader Black Bear Ridge project is envisioned as a mixed-use community incorporating housing, commercial development, recreational facilities and resort uses.

A provincial Minister's Zoning Order issued in 2022 permits development on roughly 370 hectares and allows up to 3,049 residential units across the Black Bear Ridge lands.

City planning documents show extensive servicing, transportation, stormwater, environmental and hydrogeological studies have been submitted in support of the first phase.

Council approval of the draft subdivision would allow the development to move into its next stages, subject to conditions imposed by the city and other reviewing agencies

Grenville OPP gets $187,500 to combat auto theft

GRENVILLE: County OPP will receive $187,500 in provincial funding to strengthen investigations into automobile theft and organized criminal activity throughout the region.

The funding was announced Oct. 15 by Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes MPP Steve Clark under Ontario's Preventing Auto Thefts Grant Program.

The investment will provide police with additional investigative tools, specialized training and resources to identify criminal networks, recover stolen vehicles and prevent further thefts.

Grenville County OPP Inspector Lisa Nicholas welcomed the funding, saying it will support an intelligence-led enforcement initiative involving municipal partners and other community stakeholders.

The initiative will improve information sharing, co-ordinate enforcement operations and strengthen frontline policing efforts against organized automobile theft.

Clark said the investment demonstrates the province's commitment to assisting local police in protecting residents and disrupting criminal organizations responsible for vehicle theft.

Outdoor defibrillator is working 24-hours for heart emergencies

LANARK HIGHLANDS: The Township of Lanark Highlands now has an outdoor automated external defibrillator (AED) Save Station in the Village which was donated by Lanark—Frontenac MP Scott Reid.

Reid has donated these units before, and has a long-running campaign to have them installed in RCMP cruisers across Canada.

The Lanark Highlands unit is accessible to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

An AED is a portable medical device designed to help people experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. It analyzes the heart's rhythm and, when necessary, delivers an electrical shock to help restore a normal heartbeat.

Quick access to an AED, combined with cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), can significantly improve a person's chances of survival before emergency medical personnel arrive.

You can reach Smiths Falls with your local newspaper

If you have a message for the residents of Smiths Falls and adjacent townships the most effective way to reach them is an advertisement in this weekly newspaper. For information call today at 613-299-6672. Or reach us by email at: smithsfalls.journal@gmail.com

Entertainment & Events

Halloween festivities, live theatre and events highlight Smiths Falls calendar

Halloween celebrations, live theatre, family activities and downtown shopping events will provide plenty of entertainment in Smiths Falls during the final days of October.

The Smiths Falls Station Theatre at 53 Victoria Avenue continues its presentation of Agatha Christie's murder mystery The Hollow, with performances October 22, 23 and 24, concluding with an October 25 matinee.

The classic mystery follows a gathering of guests at an English country home where romantic entanglements, jealousy and secrets lead to murder. Nearly everyone has a motive, leaving audiences to discover the identity of the killer. Adult tickets are $25 and student admission is $10.

The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum, at 11 Old Slys Road, will present another weekend of Haunted Heritage House on October 23 and 24. Visitors can explore the historic residence after dark, encountering eerie surprises and seasonal scares. Advance registration is strongly recommended because the popular event frequently sells out.

The museum is also organizing its Community Pumpkin Carving Contest and Pumpkin Walk from October 23 to 31. Individuals, families, businesses and school classes are invited to participate, with fall-themed prizes available.

Downtown Smiths Falls will become a centre of Halloween activity Saturday, October 24, when the annual Skele-Bration celebration returns from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The family-friendly event includes costumes and trick-or-treating opportunities, encouraging residents to visit downtown businesses.

Later that Saturday, the Smiths Falls Mystic Market will operate from 5 to 9 p.m. along Russell Street East. Visitors can browse crystals, handmade creations, vintage treasures and unusual merchandise in an evening celebrating the mysterious and unconventional.

The Smiths Falls Public Library is also joining the Halloween festivities with its Escape the Cursed Carnival activity, scheduled for October 23, 24 and 26. Participants can test their problem-solving skills in a seasonal escape-room adventure.

On October 24, the library is offering its own Skelebration activities, while an adult Ghost in a Jar Diorama craft workshop is scheduled for October 22 at 6:30 p.m.



For children, there will be a Halloween Town Market & Scavenger Hunt on Sunday, Oct. 25, beginning at 11 a.m. in Lower Reach Park. They will have a chance to join a Halloween bingo with prizes and a Glow-in-the-Dark Dance Party with TV entertainer DJ Trevor.

The library's October 29 calendar includes a paranormal investigation program at 8 p.m., offering another opportunity to explore the supernatural as Halloween approaches.

For younger residents, the library will offer a Ghost in a Jar craft session October 30 at 3:30 p.m., followed by a STEM Saturday program October 31 at 2 p.m.

Smiths Falls will also begin looking toward the Christmas season with a kickoff weekend scheduled for October 31 and November 1, extending the community's festive calendar beyond Halloween.





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SF prepares to honour veterans at Remembrance Day ceremony — Page 12

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Smiths Falls Record Journal

Smiths Falls has a new council and a mayor

PAGE 3

Chamber open nomination for annual business awards

PAGE 3

Newly elected Mayor Christopher Cummings also won a congratulatory kiss from his wife on Monday night. See the details on page 3.

PHOTO: Jacqueline Marie

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Merrickville-Wolford delays recreation agreement with SF

The Merrickville-Wolford council has deferred a proposed one-year extension of its recreation cost-sharing agreement with the Town of Smiths Falls, leaving the decision for the incoming municipal council.

At its Oct. 13 meeting, council considered a bylaw that would authorize an extension and amendment to the existing agreement.

However, councillors deferred the matter to allow the next council to examine the financial implications before making a commitment.

According to the municipality's council update, Smiths Falls is expected to provide an estimated dollar amount representing the 4.58 per cent figure referenced in the proposed agreement.

The postponement means the newly elected council will have an opportunity to review the anticipated costs and determine whether to proceed.

The agreement concerns shared recreation costs between the two municipalities, an issue that directly affects municipal budgeting and the availability of recreational services.

The incoming council is scheduled to hold its inaugural meeting Nov. 16 at 6 p.m.

Smiths Falls to host workshop for the community grant applicants

Community organizations and groups interested in applying for municipal funding in 2027 are invited to attend a free grant application workshop hosted by the Town of Smiths Falls on Monday, November 2.

The workshop, organized by Smiths Falls Community Development, will take place from 1 to 2:30 p.m. in the upstairs area of the Smiths Falls Youth Arena.

Participants will learn who is eligible for funding, which projects, programs and expenses qualify, and how to prepare an effective grant application.

Municipal staff will provide examples of successful funding requests, offer advice on describing proposed projects and explain application requirements, deadlines and the review process. The town's 2027 Community Grant Program will accept applications from November 1 through November 30.

The program provides an opportunity for community organizations to seek municipal financial support for initiatives that contribute to local programs, activities and services.

Registration is available online at smithsfalls.ca/GrantWorkshop.

Get ahead with digital edition of the Journal

The fastest way to get the news is with a free subscription to the Smith Falls Record-Journal's digital edition that is a day ahead of the newsstand delivery.

The digital edition is compact and reader-friendly on most computer screens and the colour is vivid.

You can obtain this newspaper at the website: journalpublications.ca. Delivery will start at the next publication date, and forever afterward.



PHOTO: Jacqueline Marie

Mayor Christoper Cummings (right) embraces opponent Peter McKenna in a friendly gesture on election night at town hall.

Cummings pledges collaborative leadership

Newly elected Mayor Christopher Cummings is promising experienced, collaborative leadership, responsible financial management and a renewed emphasis on economic development after winning Monday's municipal election, marking his return to local politics following an eight-year absence.

Cummings, who previously served 12 years on town council from 2006 to 2018, defeated Peter McKenna and Nate Morris in the October 26 election, succeeding outgoing Mayor Shawn Pankow.

"I am deeply honoured by the confidence the people of Smiths Falls have placed in me," Cummings said in a statement following his victory.

"Throughout this campaign, I had the opportunity to speak with hundreds of residents, hear their concerns, and learn more about their hopes for our community. Those conversations reinforced my belief that Smiths Falls has tremendous potential."

Since launching his campaign May 1, Cummings knocked on approximately 1,500 doors, visited local businesses, attended community events and organized informal meetings with residents.

He said those conversations reinforced the need for improved communication, economic development and careful management of municipal finances.

"People love Smiths Falls, but they also want to see progress. They want responsible financial management, a stronger local economy, and a municipal government that listens and responds to their concerns."

Cummings brings four decades of experience in financial services, along with leadership experience as chair of the Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario and Rideau Community Health Services.

During his previous council service, he participated in economic

Chamber opens nominations for the annual business awards

The Smiths Falls & District Chamber of Commerce is accepting nominations for its 2026 Business Awards Gala, scheduled for November 27 at Gemmell's Garden Centre.

The event, organized in partnership with the Town of Smiths Falls, will recognize local businesses and individuals for their achievements, contributions to the community and efforts to strengthen the local economy.

The gala begins at 7:30 p.m. and will bring together business owners, entrepreneurs, community leaders and representatives of local organizations.

The Chamber is encouraging residents to nominate businesses that have demonstrated exceptional service, achieved significant milestones or made meaningful contributions to the Smiths Falls area.

Organizers say the awards provide an opportunity to recognize the work involved in operating a successful business and highlight accomplishments that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Information about nominations and the awards gala is available through the Smiths Falls & District Chamber of Commerce.

Voters choose new council

Cummings elected Smiths Falls mayor

Christopher Cummings has been elected mayor of Smiths Falls, defeating Peter McKenna and Nate Morris in Monday's municipal election, while voters selected six councillors from a field of 15 candidates.

Cummings, a former three-term councillor who served from 2006 to 2018, captured 1,781 votes, compared with 986 for MKenna and 599 for Morris.

The victory marks Cummings' return to municipal politics after eight years and brings a change in leadership following Mayor Shawn Pankow's decision not to seek re-election.

In the council race, Jennifer Miller topped the polls with 2,008 votes, narrowly ahead of Bill Dickson with 1,997.

Christopher McGuire finished third with 1,845 votes, followed by Greg Hull with 1,745, Dawn Quinn with 1,458 and Alex Brown with 1,155.

Brown captured the sixth and final council seat by just 17 votes over Stephen Robinson, who received 1,138. James Creighton followed closely with 1,128 votes and Leslie Allison Richardson received 1,115, underscoring the tight competition for the final council position.

The results establish a new municipal leadership team facing significant financial and infrastructure challenges over the next four years.

Among the major issues confronting council are rising municipal costs, water and sewer rates, downtown revitalization, physician recruitment and the future of the proposed $50-million recreation complex.

The election campaign also featured debate over policing costs, drinking water concerns, economic development and the use of strong mayor powers.

Council will also face decisions about maintaining aging infrastructure while accommodating new residential development and protecting taxpayers from further increases in municipal spending.

Voting was conducted exclusively by internet and telephone over eight days, beginning October 19 and concluding Monday at 8 p.m.

The newly elected mayor and council will serve a four-year term beginning November 15.

RESULTS

Unofficial results

Mayor		
Chris Cummings	1781	*
Peter McKenna	986	
Nathaniel Morris	599	
Council seats		
Greg Hull	1745	*
Chance Peterson	497	
Jennifer Miller	2008	*
Alex Brown	1155	*
James Creighton	1128	
Bill Dickson	1997	*
Lewis Koluk	777	
Spring Loomes	367	
Christopher McGuire	1845	*
Dawn Quinn	1458	*
Leslie Richardson	1115	
Stephen Robinson	1138	
Zachary Thoms	563	
Peggy Lee Tye-Bernicky	428	
Guerin Marie-Pier	386	

* Denotes winners

after Smiths Falls mayoral victory

development efforts following the loss of approximately 1,700 manufacturing jobs in 2007 and 2008.

He believes that experience will help the municipality confront current financial pressures while encouraging new investment and economic growth.

"Smiths Falls has faced significant challenges before, and I've seen what can happen when municipal government, businesses, community organizations, and other levels of government work together," he said.

The incoming administration faces several major decisions, including the future of a proposed $50-million recreation complex, infrastructure improvements, municipal spending pressures, physician recruitment and downtown revitalization.

Cummings identified economic development, responsible financial management, stronger community partnerships and improved communication with residents as priorities for the next four years.

He congratulated the newly elected councillors and thanked his mayoral opponents for contributing ideas throughout the campaign.

He also encouraged unsuccessful candidates to remain involved in community affairs, emphasizing the importance of volunteerism.

Cummings said respectful debate and cooperation will be essential to council's success.

"We won't always agree, but respectful discussion, different perspectives, and a willingness to work together will help us make better decisions for the people we represent."

His administration will be guided by four principles emphasized throughout his campaign: Listen, Collaborate, Advocate and Act.

Cummings thanked campaign volunteers and his wife, Linda, for their support during the six-month campaign.

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Johns 8:32 -
Ye shall learn the truth, and the truth will set you free

Health

Perth and Smiths Falls hospital completes 1,000th robotic-assisted knee replacement



THIS KNEE FIXER is officially known as the Zimmer Biomet ROSA Knee System.

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN

The Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital (PSFDH) has completed its 1,000th robotic-assisted knee replacement surgery, five years after introducing the technology.

The hospital began using the Zimmer Biomet ROSA Knee System in 2021, becoming the first community hospital in Canada and the first hospital in Eastern Ontario to adopt the technology.

The system provides orthopedic surgeons with real-time information during knee replacement procedures, helping them position implants more precisely and adjust the surgery to each patient's anatomy.

The hospital says the program has helped patients reduce pain and improve mobility while providing access to specialized surgery closer to home.

"This is an exciting milestone for our team and the patients we serve," said Dr. Mark Roberts, orthopedic surgeon and ROSA Knee System lead at PSFDH.

"Reaching 1,000 robotic-assisted knee replacements reflects the trust our patients place in us, the dedication of our surgical team, and our commitment to delivering innovative care and exceptional outcomes."

The hospital has also expanded its same-day orthopedic surgery program, allowing many knee replacement patients to return home within hours of their procedures.

Patients typically begin walking shortly after surgery and continue their recovery at home with rehabilitation and physiotherapy support.

The program serves patients from across Eastern Ontario, reducing the need for some residents to travel to larger hospitals for knee replacement procedures.

PSFDH president and CEO Michael Cohen said the milestone reflects the hospital's efforts to maintain specialized surgical services in the region.

"This milestone is really about our patients. Over the past five years, 1,000 people have benefited from robotic-assisted knee replacement surgery at PSFDH, helping them regain mobility and improve their quality of life," Cohen said.

The hospital has not released comparative data on surgical outcomes, recovery times or costs associated with the robotic-assisted procedures.

Petawawa man charged with impaired driving in Carleton Place

A 47-year-old Petawawa man is facing impaired driving and other charges after police stopped a vehicle travelling without rear lights in Carleton Place.

Lanark County Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers conducted the traffic stop on Townline Road shortly after 8 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 18, after an officer noticed a vehicle being driven after dark without functioning rear lights.

The driver was arrested and taken to the OPP detachment in Carleton Place for alcohol testing.

Following the investigation, Gregory Lavallee, 47, of Petawawa, was charged with operating a vehicle while impaired by alcohol, operating a vehicle with a blood alcohol concentration exceeding the legal limit of 80 milligrams per 100 millilitres of blood, driving without proper rear lights, driving without a licence and operating a motor vehicle with liquor readily available.

Lavallee was released from custody and is scheduled to appear in the Ontario Court of Justice in Perth on Monday, Nov. 23.

His driver's licence was suspended for 90 days under Ontario's Administrative Driver's Licence Suspension program, and the vehicle was impounded for seven days.

Cataract surgery now a routine medical miracle — *just ask me*

I'm not into Pinterest. Not my thing. Still, that didn't stop the smart-ass algorithm that drives the "visual discovery engine" from sending me a message saying: "Peter, you've got a good eye."

Which was an unnecessarily cruel thing for an algorithm to say to a person with only one good eye. At least that was the case until very recently when, after a wait of about seven months, I had double cataract surgery.

If you are an ophthalmologist reading this, who may want to skip now to the funnies or sports pages, because what I have to say will be old news to you – as if medical magic should ever be taken for granted or considered routine.

I've gone from abject ignorance of cataracts to a bit of an ophthalmological fanboy. I've also learned I am now a member of a semi-religious cult founded on a proven miracle: "I was blind but now I see."

I kept on bumping into – sometimes literally - friends who with a divine glow about them, talked about their cataract surgery. "You'll see," they said without a hint of irony.

A bit about my case: About a year ago, I began to notice some irritation in my right eye and sensitivity to light in both. OK, so I'm not getting any younger, but this seemed different. The optometrist barely blinked after a bunch of tests – yup, cataracts in both eyes, but the right one is bad.

Within two months, the bad orb became completely clouded, rendering me effectively blind in that eye. It's called a white cataract which, I learn, comes in some exotically named varieties: Fluffy acute diabetic cataracts, hypermature brunescent cataracts and liquified cortical cataracts.

3-minutes with
Peter Black
Columnist



A wee panic set in back in January, as the "good eye" started to deteriorate at a perceptible rate, making de facto blindness a real prospect.

Reading and writing on the computer had become a question of creative solutions such as giant type and strategic use of a magnifying glass. Walking became an obstacle course through a cloudy house of mirrors.

Finally, after a certain amount of pathetic pleading with the ophthalmology clinic at a local hospital I got my appointment with the surgeon and three months later, the date for the procedure.

What was performed on me has been done in one form or another, Google says, for 4,000 years, dating back to the Egyptians. It was called "couching" and involved using needles to clear away the clouded lens stuff.

Results, apparently and understandably, were mixed. A botched couching operation blinded composer Johann Sebastian Bach in 1750; he died of complications four months later. Had timing been more on his side, he may have benefited from the breakthrough in 1747 by French physician Jacques Daviel who conducted the first cataract extraction.

It was Sir Harold Ridley, the father of modern ophthalmological surgery, who, while treating British pilots during the Second World War, noticed that shards of plastic from shattered aircraft canopies embedded in the eyes were not being rejected by the body.

Eureka and therefore, the type of plastic used for the canopies was suitable for making artificial lenses – intraocular lens or IOL – for implanting in the eyes of cataract patients. Sir Ridley performed the first successful IOL implant in 1949. (Nearly 50 years later, the inventor himself got new lenses).

Cataract operations have since become one of the most common surgical procedures in the world; In Canada, about 500,000 operations are performed annually on the 2.5 million people afflicted with cataracts at any one time. The rate has been increasing by about four per cent a year as the population ages.

So, I'm going to reply to Pinterest if it sends that message again – I've got two very good eyes now – thanks to the wonders of ophthalmology.

* * *

November is Radon Action Month across Canada and in Lanark County

The Southeast Public Health (SEPH) is encouraging homeowners to test their homes for radon. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, after smoking.

It's a colourless, odourless and tasteless radioactive gas that comes from the natural breakdown of uranium in soils and rocks.

When radon is released from the ground into enclosed areas such as homes, it can accumulate to high levels and with long term exposure can cause a risk to health.

Radon can enter homes through cracks in foundations, construction joints, gaps around pipes, sump pumps and drains, and exposed rock in basements.

Radon levels in a home can fluctuate throughout the seasons; levels are usually higher in the fall and winter when windows are closed. The health risk increases as the level of radon and the duration of exposure increases.

Health Canada recommends that radon levels do not exceed 200 Becquerels per cubic metre (200 Bq/m3).

"The only way to know if radon is a problem in a home or building is to test," says Joyce MacNeil, Senior Public Health Inspector with the LGLDHU. "Health Canada recommends that homeowners do a long-term radon test, for a minimum of three months, during the fall or winter."

If radon levels in your home are above the Canadian guideline (200 Bq/m3), Health Canada recommends hiring a professional certified under the Canadian National Radon Proficiency Program (www.c-nrpp.ca) to help reduce radon levels.

You can purchase a radon test kit by contacting a local hardware store.

SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

TOWN PAGE

SMITHS FALLS

OCTOBER 28, 2026

WHAT'S HAPPENING

BOO!

Heritage House Museum: Join the Nightwatchmen Investigative Team on November 21 from 8 pm to midnight for paranormal investigation of the Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum. The investigation is for those ages 18+ and you will, with the help of the investigators, go through the house, use the equipment and see what can be found. The investigation runs from 8:00 pm - midnight and tickets cost $50 per person.Tickets can be purchased at the Museum or on Eventbrite at: ***sfghosthunt.eventbrite.ca***.

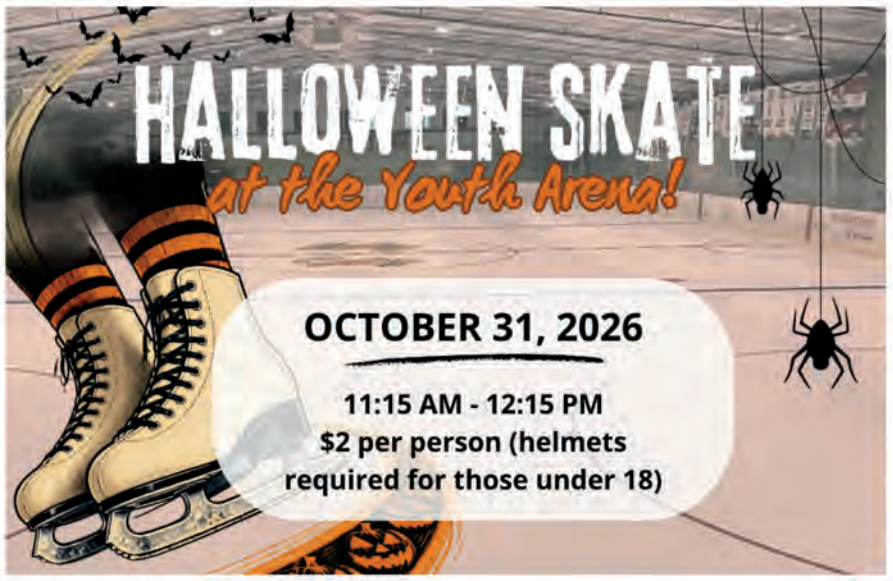
Smiths Falls Public Library: Ghosts in the library?! Some spooky enthusiasts say yes. Join the Smiths Falls Public Library for a Paranormal Investigation on October 29 at 8 pm. Tickets are $40 and can be purchased at the library. All proceeds will go towards library programs and services.

WINTER PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Winter parking restrictions officially begin November 15, 2026. However, if November brings us snow or freezing rain before then, the restrictions will start early. Please keep this in mind when parking on Town streets as we head into colder weather.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

November 2, 2026 Regular Meeting of Council 5 PM
Attend in person at Town Hall (77 Beckwith Street North)
or view live streamed proceedings on:
Facebook - facebook.com/townofsmithsfalls
YouTube - Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls
For Council, Committee and Board meeting agendas, visit:
smithsfalls.ca/meeting



SMITHS FALLS
RISE AT THE FALLS

Hosted by Smiths Falls Community Development

2027 COMMUNITY GRANT WORKSHOP



Thinking about applying for a 2027 Smiths Falls Community Grant & have questions? Join us for a FREE Workshop November 2nd 2026.

You can expect to learn:

- **Who is eligible to apply**
  and what projects, programs and expenses qualify for funding
- **How to write a strong application**
  including examples of well-written requests and tips for clearly outlining your project or program
- **What to expect from the process**
  Application requirements, timelines, review process and answers to your questions

Grant Applications accepted from November 1st - November 30th.

REGISTER TODAY at **smithsfalls.ca/GrantWorkshop**

Light refreshments will be provided

1:00 - 2:30 | MONDAY NOV 2nd | 2026
Smiths Falls Youth Arena, Upstairs

BECOME A COMMUNITY LEAD TESTING VOLUNTEER

The Town is currently seeking participants to help safeguard our drinking water by allowing a certified Water Treatment Operator to visit your home or business to test your water for lead. Lead is a soft metal that is mined from rocks and can be found in many sources including water. Lead can be harmful to human health even at low exposure levels. If your house or business was built prior to 1955 you may have lead plumbing within your home. The purpose of this free lead sampling program is to compile with the Town's Municipal Drinking Water License (MDWL) whereby the Town must collect 22 drinking water samples from selected residential or business properties to help assess lead levels associated with internal plumbing. Interested in volunteering? Call 613-283-4124 Ext. 5502 or email scooke@smithsfalls.ca.

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144678



A LOON with her chick on a Lanark County lake last year.

Save the Loon:

Lanark County backs campaign to remove lead from our lakes

BY ALISTAIR MACLEAN

A new study shows a 45 per cent decline in Ontario loon chick production adds urgency to efforts to protect the iconic Canadian bird

Lanark County Council has thrown its support behind an environmental campaign to reduce lead pollution in Ontario lakes, just as new scientific research reveals an alarming decline in the reproductive success of Canada's common loons.

At its Oct. 14 meeting, county council endorsed the *Let's Get the Lead Out* Initiative, a campaign spearheaded by the Wolfe Lake Association to restrict the use of certain lead-based fishing tackle in Ontario waterways.

The initiative seeks to bring provincial regulations more closely in line with existing Parks Canada restrictions on lead fishing tackle in national parks.

Lead fishing weights and sinkers can remain on lakebeds indefinitely when lost or discarded. Loons sometimes swallow these objects while searching for food or ingesting grit to aid digestion. Even a small amount of lead can cause fatal poisoning.

Campaign organizers identify lead poisoning as a major preventable cause of death among adult common loons.

The county's endorsement comes amid growing concerns about the long-term survival of the species.

A major international study published Oct. 22 in the scientific journal FACETS found substantial declines in loon chick production across 10 of 12 North American breeding regions.

Birds Canada

Led by Birds Canada and international collaborators, the research examined more than 45,000 breeding attempts between 1975 and 2023 on approximately 3,400 lakes in nine Canadian provinces and seven American states.

Researchers found that chick production declined by an average of 40 per cent across the 10 affected regions.

Ontario recorded a 45 per cent decline between 1981 and 2023, while Atlantic Canada experienced a 74 per cent reduction and the Prairie provinces suffered a 65 per cent decline.

Quebec and Maine were the only regions where chick production remained relatively stable or increased slightly.

Scientists believe climate change is a leading contributor, alongside human disturbances, shoreline development and deteriorating lake conditions. The study did not establish lead poisoning as the cause of the widespread decline in chick production.

Canada is home to approximately 94 per cent of the world's breeding common loons, placing much of the responsibility for protecting the species within Canadian borders.

Campaign

The Wolfe Lake Association has already been working to remove lead from local waterways through its *Turn In Your Lead to Win* campaign.

The association reports collecting approximately 235 kilograms, or 520 pounds, of lead through its recycling efforts.

Residents and anglers are encouraged to surrender old lead fishing tackle, lead shot and other lead weights for recycling. The association has arranged collection opportunities through its board members and the Westport Lions Reuse & Recycle Centre.

The current campaign continues until Oct. 31.

Birds Canada is also encouraging anglers to switch to non-toxic fishing tackle, properly dispose of fishing line and other plastics, and avoid disturbing nesting loons and their chicks.

For Lanark County's many lakeside communities, the loon campaign carries particular significance. The bird's distinctive call has long been part of the summer landscape, but researchers warn that continued declines in reproduction could eventually threaten its presence on Canadian lakes.



OPP East Region urging families and drivers to make this Halloween a safe one

With Halloween approaching on Saturday, Oct. 31, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) across East Region are reminding parents, children and drivers to take precautions to ensure a safe and enjoyable evening of trick-or-treating.

Police say the excitement of Halloween can sometimes cause children to overlook basic safety rules, particularly when crossing streets or moving between houses after dark.

The OPP recommends that children wear brightly coloured costumes or reflective clothing to make themselves more visible to drivers. Carrying a flashlight or glow stick can also improve visibility.

Parents are encouraged to use face makeup instead of masks, which can restrict a child's vision. If a mask is worn, its eye and mouth openings should be large enough to allow the child to see and breathe comfortably.

Costumes should also fit properly to reduce the risk of tripping.

Children should never trick-or-treat alone. Younger children should be accompanied by an adult, while older children travelling with friends should tell their parents where they are going and when they expect to return.

Police recommend staying in familiar neighbourhoods, using sidewalks whenever possible and crossing streets at intersections or designated crosswalks.

Trick-or-treaters should walk rather than run, avoid crossing back and forth between houses on opposite sides of the street and visit only homes that are well lit and participating in Halloween activities.

Children should never enter a stranger's home to collect candy, and all treats should be inspected by a parent or guardian before being eaten.

Motorists also have an important responsibility on Halloween night.

The OPP urges drivers to reduce their speed in residential neighbourhoods and watch carefully for children who may suddenly step onto the roadway.

$300-mil. cell expansion improves coverage across all eastern Ontario

Lanark County benefits from 17 new towers as regional network exceeds its coverage targets

A major telecommunications expansion across eastern Ontario has largely been completed, with more than $300 million invested in infrastructure to improve cellphone coverage and eliminate longstanding gaps in rural communities.

The Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) reports its Cell Gap Project has met or exceeded all three of its original coverage targets, improving connectivity for residents, businesses and motorists travelling throughout the region.

The public-private partnership, involving federal, provincial and municipal governments and Rogers Communications, was designed to address unreliable cellular service in communities where weak signals have long affected everyday communication, business operations and emergency response.

EORN CEO Jason St. Pierre said the project has delivered significant improvements, although some isolated gaps remain.

The original targets called for 99 per cent cellular coverage for making and receiving telephone calls, 95 per cent coverage for email, web browsing and social media, and 85 per cent coverage for data-intensive applications such as video conferencing and streaming.

Three objectives

All three objectives have now been exceeded, with most construction and infrastructure upgrades completed.

In Lanark County, the investment has resulted in 17 new telecommunications towers, 10 upgrades to existing infrastructure and five shared towers.

The county contributed almost $582,000 toward the initiative.

Across eastern Ontario, the federal and provincial governments each provided approximately $71 million, while Rogers committed at least $150 million. Municipal governments contributed another $10 million.

The total investment exceeds $300 million, excluding in-kind contributions and additional community benefits.

Despite the progress, St. Pierre acknowledged that approximately one per cent of the region may continue to experience cellular coverage gaps.

Remaining coverage holes

EORN plans to work with Lanark County staff to identify remaining problem areas and consult Rogers about practical solutions.

Rogers customers have received the greatest direct benefits from the project because the company is the primary private-sector partner.

However, improvements by other telecommunications providers are expected to give residents and businesses additional connectivity options.

The improvements extend beyond cellular service. A separate rural broadband initiative has helped bring high-speed internet to homes and businesses previously overlooked by larger provincial expansion programs.

Five local internet service providers participated in the Lanark County program, using fibre-optic connections and fixed wireless technology to reach rural and difficult-to-service properties.

Storm Internet has provided connectivity to 697 previously unserved premises in several areas of the county.

The improvements are particularly important in rural communities where reliable internet access supports home-based businesses, remote employment, education and access to online services.

The Cell Gap Project's results were outlined in a recent presentation to Lanark County Council, although the broader regional initiative reached its major completion milestone in August.

EORN will now prepare a detailed assessment of the project's return on investment and provide a final report to participating municipal councils.



A WORKER scales a cell tower to improve communications.

Police report arrests in series of criminal investigations

Smiths Falls police officers made an assortment of arrests in September and October

County POLICE BLOTTER

Smiths Falls Police Service has reported a series of arrests involving impaired driving, assaults, thefts, weapons offences and breaches of court orders during September and October.

Among the most serious incidents was a Sept. 28 lockdown at TR Leger School following a report of a possible weapon.

Police secured the building, located a suspect and seized an imitation firearm without incident. The lockdown was lifted after officers determined there was no continuing threat to public safety.

The suspect faces five charges, including pointing a firearm, carrying a concealed weapon, using an imitation firearm while committing an offence and uttering threats.

Stabbing arrest

On Oct. 3, officers investigating a reported stabbing arrested a 23-year-old Smiths Falls man. He faces eight charges, including assault causing bodily harm, assault with a weapon, uttering threats and weapons offences. He was held pending a bail hearing.

Suspect fled

Another weapons-related incident occurred Oct. 13 when police responded to a dispute in which a conducted energy weapon, commonly known as a Taser, had allegedly been used against a victim.

The suspect fled in a vehicle but was arrested following a brief police pursuit. A 25-year-old Smiths Falls man faces seven charges, including assault with a weapon, possession of a prohibited device and driving while suspended.

Wanted man arrested

Police also reported the Oct. 10 arrest of Dale Scott, 29, by Ontario Provincial Police in Carleton Place.

Scott was wanted in connection with incidents in Smiths Falls, Perth and Carleton Place dating back to August and September.

Smiths Falls police subsequently laid 42 charges, including 30 counts of operating a vehicle while prohibited, six probation violations, two counts each of fleeing police and dangerous driving, disguise with intent and theft under $5,000.

Scott was held pending a bail hearing.

Impaired driving

Two impaired driving investigations resulted in arrests during the Labour Day weekend.

On Sept. 5, a 43-year-old Smiths Falls man was charged with impaired driving, having a blood alcohol concentration exceeding the legal limit, three counts of driving while suspended and licence plate violations.

The following day, a 35-year-old Smiths Falls man was charged with impaired driving, dangerous driving, two counts of operating a vehicle while prohibited and several licensing and insurance offences.

Both drivers were released pending court appearances.

Fraud investigation

In another investigation, Patrick Reid, 43, of Embrun, surrendered to police Sept. 8 in connection with a fraud investigation dating back to 2018. He was charged with fraud over $5,000 and false pretence.

Youngsters threatened

Police also arrested a 49-year-old Smiths Falls man following a Sept. 7 complaint that several youths had been threatened at a local park.

Domestic violence

A domestic violence investigation originating July 13 resulted in the Sept. 16 arrest of a 37-year-old Augusta man on charges of assault with a weapon and three probation violations.

Theft charges

Several theft investigations also resulted in charges.

Harry Richert, 55, and Rochelle Nixon, 39, both of Smiths Falls, were arrested following a Sept. 8 theft from a local store. Each was charged with theft under $5,000.

A 19-year-old Smiths Falls man was arrested Sept. 20 following another store theft. A 37-year-old Smiths Falls woman was charged following a separate retail theft Sept. 26.

Assault charges

On Sept. 13, a 33-year-old Smiths Falls woman was arrested following an assault investigation at a residence. Charges included assault, unlawfully being in a dwelling house and breaches of court orders.

Release violations

Amanda Fraser, 36, of Smiths Falls, was arrested Sept. 15 and charged with four counts of failing to comply with a release order.

A Sept. 19 traffic stop involving a loud vehicle resulted in the arrest of a 32-year-old Brockville man on charges of breaching a release order, trespassing at night and possessing break-in instruments.

Break-in arrest

On Sept. 30, police arrested a 30-year-old Smiths Falls man following a residential break-in. He was charged with break and enter and two counts of assault.

Outstanding warants

Another unusual arrest occurred Oct. 2 when officers encountered Guy Cote, 60, of Smiths Falls, who was wanted on outstanding charges.

Police said Cote fled on a mobility scooter before being apprehended following a brief foot pursuit.

His charges include theft of a motor vehicle, possession of stolen property, drug possession, obstructing police, attempting to obstruct justice and possessing a weapon for a dangerous purpose.

Most of those charged in the more serious incidents were held pending bail hearings, while others were released with conditions and future court dates.

Police emphasized through the reports that proactive patrols, public complaints and follow-up investigations contributed to the arrests.

None of the charges has been proven in court.



Smiths Falls Record-Journal reaches a third anniversary

A month after Metroland in bankruptcy closed 70 community newspapers in Ontario, including the Smiths Falls Record-News, a new weekly paper arrived in town. You are holding the new paper; the Smiths Falls Record Journal launched a week ago in 2023. It took many by surprise that a newspaper of 157 years, under many ownerships during this time, would exist no longer. But just a month after the closure this newspaper appeared published by Montreal-based Lighthouse Publications Inc.

This is the story so far, but stay with us for the coming chapters as other towns get a newspaper as well, all of it started in Smiths Falls.

RedHawks runners turn in strong performances at Mill of Kintail



Cross-country runners from Smiths Falls District Collegiate Institute (SFDCI) turned in an impressive series of performances at the Mill of Kintail on October 23, highlighted by two individual first-place finishes and a second-place team result.

The RedHawks competed across senior, junior and novice divisions, with several athletes earning top-three finishes.

In the senior boys' competition, DJ W. led the way with a first-place finish, while teammate Nathan B. placed third. Nathan S. finished 10th and Jake K-W. placed 15th, helping the RedHawks senior boys' team secure second place overall.

Annie M. delivered a strong performance in the senior girls' division, finishing fourth.

In junior girls' competition, Kaitlyn C. also claimed fourth place, adding another top-five result for the school.

The novice divisions produced several more podium finishes. Josie S. placed third in novice girls, while Cruze M. finished third in novice boys.

One of the day's highlights came in the novice boys' para competition, where Dexter M-C. captured first place.

Altogether, the RedHawks recorded two individual victories, three third-place finishes and two fourth-place results, along with their senior boys' team runner-up finish.

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SF prepares to honour veterans at Remembrance Day ceremony

Residents of Smiths Falls will gather at the town's cenotaph on Wednesday, November 11, to honour Canadian veterans and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in military service.

The annual Remembrance Day ceremony, organized by the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 95, will begin at 11 a.m. at the cenotaph in Veterans Memorial Park.

The traditional parade is scheduled to form at the Legion hall, 7 Main Street East, at 10:30 a.m., before proceeding along Main and Beckwith streets to the memorial.

The observance will include the Act of Remembrance, a moment of silence and the laying of wreaths in memory of Canadians who served in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping missions.

Veterans, Legion members, local dignitaries, community organizations and residents are expected to participate in the annual tribute.

This year's ceremony carries additional significance as the Royal Canadian Legion celebrates its 100th anniversary, marking a century of service to veterans, their families and communities across Canada.

Smiths Falls has also strengthened its recognition of veterans through two commemorative crosswalks in the downtown area. Officially dedicated in July, the crosswalks honour the sacrifices of Canadian military personnel and provide a permanent reminder of their service.

The project was undertaken through the efforts of Branch 95, the Town of Smiths Falls and community supporters.

The Legion's annual Poppy Campaign, held in advance of Remembrance Day, provides another opportunity for residents to demonstrate their support for veterans and their families.

The November 11 ceremony will commemorate Canadians who lost their lives in the First and Second World Wars, the Korean War, Afghanistan and other military operations, while also recognizing those who continue to serve.

Residents are encouraged to attend the outdoor ceremony and observe two minutes of silence at 11 a.m.

Fingernails can indicate health problems



Did you know that your fingernails are an indicator of your health? Nails are highly sensitive to changes in the body. They need a steady flow of nutrients, oxygen, and blood flow to grow continuously, and changes to any of these will affect the way they grow. For example, using GLP-1s such as Ozempic has been shown to be associated with discolored and detached nails. The best indicator is your lunulae, the half-moon shapes at the base of your nails. It's where new nail cells are made and pushed forward. They're most prominent on your thumbs and are smaller and less visible as you move out to the pinkies. They are usually white, because the nail is thicker there, obscuring the blood vessels on the nail bed. But when you have lunulae that turn red, it could reflect systemic disease activity.

In 1954, researchers in London observed that 61% of people examined with red lunulae also had heart failure. All the others with red lunulae had some kind of systemic disease like emphysema and chronic bronchitis (both known as COPD), cirrhosis (long-term liver scarring), and cancer, including polycythemia vera (a blood cancer that causes thick, slow moving blood), lymphoma (cancer of white blood cells), and myeloid leukemia (cancer of blood and bone marrow). Red lunulae are also connected with autoimmune conditions like alopecia areata (which causes the hair to fall out in round patches), dermatomyositis (which causes skin rashes and muscle weakness), and systemic lupus erythematosus (aka SLE, which attacks healthy tissue and organs.) However, the association only exists if several fingernails have red lunulae: if it's just one, something local like an injury under that nail is more likely.

Kidney health is important

Your kidneys filter your blood, removing waste and excess fluid. They also help maintain a proper balance of water, salts and minerals, like sodium, phosphorus, calcium and potassium, in your blood.

The kidneys also produce hormones that help regulate blood pressure and produce red blood cells. Some of the leading contributors to developing kidney disease include diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and obesity.

Diabetes is a leading cause of chronic kidney disease. To help keep your kidneys healthy, eat a healthy diet, stay active, control your weight, maintain good blood pressure and blood sugar levels, and avoid tobacco and other drugs.

High blood pressure can damage the kidneys' filtering system, resulting in the kidneys not working as well at removing waste and excess fluids from the body.

The extra fluid can raise blood pressure. Keeping blood pressure in a healthy range, less than 130/80 mm Hg, is an important part of maintaining good kidney health.

Eating a potassium-rich diet can reduce blood pressure. Potassium-rich foods include potatoes, avocados, tomatoes and beans.

Also, be aware that some over-the-counter medications such as NSAIDS like ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) and aspirin as well as some supplements and herbal medications can harm the kidneys.

Anti-inflammatory diet protects against dementia

A new study shows that an anti-inflammatory diet appears to lower dementia risk in people already showing biological signs linked to Alzheimer's disease. Researchers analyzed data from 1,865 adults without dementia, ages 60 and older, who took part in the Swedish National Study on Aging and Care. At the start of the study, they measured three blood biomarkers linked to Alzheimer's disease and other signs of damage or stress in the brain. They also assessed participants' diets, lifestyle habits and health status. They found that a less inflammatory diet pattern was associated with a lower risk of dementia among participants who at the start of the study had elevated blood biomarkers indicating Alzheimer's-related brain changes or other signs of brain-cell injury.

To follow an anti-inflammatory diet, fill half of your plate with vegetables and fruit. Include leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage, colourful bell peppers, tomatoes and sweet potato as well as berries, cherries, oranges, apples and pears. Fill one-quarter of your plate with either whole grains, such as oats, brown rice, quinoa and whole grain pasta, or pulses such as chickpeas, black beans, lentils or kidney beans.

Fill the remainder of your plate with healthy protein such as fish, seafood, poultry or tofu. Build your snacks around nuts, seeds and fruit.

Our History

Lanark County played a role in the dentistry we know today

BY ARLENE STAFFORD-WILSON



Imagine suffering with a painful nagging toothache and your best course of action is to visit a blacksmith. Some may be surprised to learn that licensed dental practices were non-existent in the first half of the 19th century.

Without modern remedies, pain-relieving drugs, along with drilling and filling, the only cure for a bad tooth was to pull it out. The village smithy was the logical choice, with his heavy-duty iron pincers, pliers, and hammers, he could easily fashion a dental tooth key. As the name suggests, these tools operated like a door key, featuring a metal handle, central shaft, and hinged metal claw to wrench teeth from the patient's mouth.

By the 1850s, there were modest improvements and dentistry was mainly practiced by local physicians who performed emergency dental treatments.

The other option was itinerant dubiously trained practitioners, known as tramp dentists. These operators moved from town to town throughout the province.

In Lanark County, these traveling practitioners placed ads in local newspapers inviting the public to a temporary shop in a local hotel or storefront.

They carried portable equipment to extract teeth, with the dental tooth key most commonly used. Due to an absence of modern anesthesia in these makeshift shops, adult patients were offered a drink of alcohol to dull their senses. Understandably, many of these crude extractions resulted in cracked jaws, teeth broken off at the root, along with torn gums and shattered bones.

During the 1860s the use of chloroform grew in popularity and was widely used in Upper Canada, eliminating the terror of the dental key.

Unfortunately, without equipment to monitor precise dosages, the patients sometimes died from respiratory failure or cardiac arrest in the dental chair.

A better alternative was the use of nitrous oxide, also known as laughing gas. Modern manufacturing improvements allowed the gas to be stored in portable metal cylinders, and it proved safer than chloroform, allowing patients to wake up almost immediately after treatment.

In this early era of dentistry, anyone with a box of dental instruments could claim to be a dentist, despite a lack of training or ability.

Recognizing a need for standard practices, a group of dedicated dentists founded the Ontario Dental Association in 1867. By March of 1868, an act was passed by the Ontario Legislature placing the powers of licensing and regulating into the hands of the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario.

This formal legal regulatory body for the practice of dentistry, anesthesia and surgery, was the first of its kind, and became a model for similar legislation across Canada.

All across Lanark County dentists and dentistry forged a lasting legacy in our local history.

In Perth, the local town dentist, Dr. J.F. Kennedy, was a good friend to telephone pioneer, Alexander Graham Bell. Because of their relationship, one of the first telephone lines was installed, connecting his home with his dental practice on Foster Street.

His dental office housed one of Perth's first switchboards in 1887, establishing a network of local telephone lines.

Carleton Place was the childhood home to one of Canada's most distinguished dental pioneers, Dr. Harold K. Box. Dr. Box graduated from the Royal College of Dental Surgeons and was the first Canadian dentist to earn a PhD in general pathology.

In the 1920s his trailblazing research was key to the first successful treatment for gum disease. A heritage plaque in St. James Park was installed along the north shore of the Mississippi River, dedicated to Dr. Box, "The Father of Dental Research."

In Smiths Falls, the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario features a venerable old railway car, known as Camrose. Built as a first-class sleeper car, it was converted in 1950 by the Ontario Department of Health, into a mobile dental clinic, that traveled around the country providing free dental care for children. The Camrose traveled to remote communities along the rail lines, retiring from service in 1977, the last active dental railcar in Ontario.

By the 1950s dentistry experienced rapid expansion, ushering in auxiliary workers, including dental hygienists, officially recognized as regulated health professionals.

As the decades passed, safer modern forms of local anesthesia, the use of x-rays, and high-speed drills, all played their part in modernizing the profession.

Through advances in technology, standards for training, and regulations established to protect the patient, the act of sitting in the dentist's chair has become a far more pleasant experience.

Dentistry has come a long way since the pioneers relied on their local blacksmith to fix a toothache, and the evolution of this vital skill through the years remains a fascinating part of our local history.

* * *

Local historian Arlene Stafford-Wilson is author of more than a dozen books on Lanark County. For more information see: arlenestaffordwilson.wordpress.com

Town council updates Hillcrest Cemetery bylaw

BY SCOTT CARMICHAEL



Pre-election Smiths Falls town council adopted a replacement bylaw governing the maintenance and operations of the municipally owned and operated Hillcrest Cemetery during the last meeting of its four-year term on October 19.

"Our existing bylaw dates back to the 1990s, 1998…And we've made some amendments over the years, but it was overdue for a comprehensive review," the Town's Director of Community Services Stephanie Clark said during that council session.

"The purpose of this exercise was to… modernize the bylaw, ensure that it reflects the current provincial legislative framework, and establish clear and more consistent rules for the operation and administration of our wonderful cemetery."

In a staff report, Clark points out that the now previous cemetery ordinance was "established under an earlier legislative and operational framework," and that Ontario cemetery operations are now governed by the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act (2002), and its regulations with the oversight of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO).

"(Town) staff reviewed the existing provisions to modernize terminology, clarify responsibilities, improve administrative consistency and address day-to-day cemetery operations," added Clark.

"The revised bylaw is intended to provide clear rules for interment rights holders, families, funeral service providers, monument dealers, contractors and municipal staff while supporting safe, respectful and dignified cemetery operations."

Clark also states that the updated bylaw "introduces enforceable standards that govern interments, the installation and maintenance of memorials and monuments, and the handling of prohibited items or activities, thereby enhancing the safety, dignity, and consistency of cemetery operations."

A 'Summary of Proposed Changes' in her report consists of seven categories: interment rights and records; interments and memorial services; grave capacity and burial containers; markers, monuments and contractors; grounds, decorations and columbarium; administration and fees; and legislative and implementation considerations.

Among those changes are the clarification of "the purchase, documentation, transfer, cancellation and permitted resale of interment rights," establishment of operating hours, confirmation of the cemetery caretaker's "oversight of grave and niche operations," and the provision "for reasonable accommodation of urgent, religious and cultural (funeral and burial) needs."

Changes to the bylaw's grave capacity and burial containers component clarify "capacity for full-body and cremated remains interments, and permits outer burial containers, including wooden shells, where compatible with safe cemetery operations."

Those governing 'markers, monuments and contractors,' consolidate "monument approval requirements, establish installation and work standards, and address contractor qualifications, insurance, protection of cemetery property and restrictions on work during funerals."

'Grounds, decorations and columbarium' changes cover updates to planting and decoration requirements, and set out rules for "niche capacity, inscriptions, authorization and removal of cremated remains."

Changes under 'administration and fees' recognize the cemetery's former chapel "as an office and storage facility, the maintaining of cemetery forms and records administratively," and "refers fees to the Town's Fees and Charges Bylaw rather than embedding schedules of fees in the cemetery bylaw."

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County launches business survey to strengthen our local economy

More than 300 businesses contacted as county seeks input on economic growth

Lanark County is reaching out to hundreds of local businesses to identify challenges, explore opportunities for growth and develop an action plan aimed at strengthening the regional economy.



Tim Woods

The county's Business Retention and Expansion (BR+E) program has already contacted more than 300 businesses, with 80 interviews completed toward a target of 200.

The initiative focuses on six key economic sectors: retail, tourism, agriculture, skilled trades and construction, manufacturing, and natural resources.

Information collected through structured interviews will help identify the concerns facing local businesses, including potential obstacles to expansion, workforce development and long-term sustainability.

The program is designed not only to attract economic development but also to help existing businesses remain competitive, retain employees and expand their operations.

BR+E Coordinator Tim Woods said considerable groundwork has already been completed, including developing survey questions and organizing five volunteer training sessions.

Those sessions have produced 45 trained volunteers who are conducting interviews with business owners and operators across the county.

"Information gathered through this initiative will be used to develop a targeted action plan, and input from businesses is critical in order to identify key priorities and inform decision-making," Woods said.

Once the interviews are completed, the county will work with community leaders to analyze the findings and develop action plans addressing the priorities identified by participating businesses.

The next phase will involve implementing those plans and monitoring progress to determine whether the measures are producing results.

The program's progress was outlined in a recent update to Lanark County Council, where Woods reported on the number of businesses contacted, interviews completed and volunteers trained.

The initiative places particular emphasis on understanding the needs of established businesses, recognizing their importance to employment, investment and economic stability in communities throughout Lanark County.

Businesses that have not yet participated are encouraged to contribute their perspectives before the interview phase concludes.

Additional information and registration details are available at www.lanarkcounty.ca/grow.

The county hopes the completed survey will provide a clearer picture of local economic conditions and help guide future decisions on business support, investment and economic development.

Obituary: James Smith, 60

Radio stations lose manager to a sudden and surprise heart attack

James Smith, a familiar figure in Eastern Ontario radio broadcasting for more than three decades and a longtime member of the Lake 88.1 team in Perth, died suddenly of a heart attack on Sept. 24. He was 60.

Smith spent much of his career in radio advertising sales and management, helping establish Lake 88.1 as a local radio station while supporting community fundraising initiatives throughout Lanark County.

His broadcasting career began in his hometown of Smiths Falls, where he worked as a board operator at 630 CJET and 101.1 CHEQ-FM when the stations were owned by CHEZ-FM Inc.

He moved into full-time advertising sales in the early 1990s and remained with the stations following their acquisition by Rogers Communications in 1999.

In 2001, Smith relocated to Kingston, beginning a four-year stint in advertising sales with CHUM-owned stations CFLY 98.3 and 1380 CKLC.

After briefly leaving radio to work for RBC in Ottawa, he returned to broadcasting in 2007 as the first employee hired by Perth FM Radio Inc., which was preparing to launch Lake 88.1 CHLK.

As general sales manager and promotions director, Smith spent more than 16 years helping develop the station's advertising business and community presence.

He was involved in local fundraising initiatives, including the station's Mountain of Food campaigns supporting area food banks and radiothons raising money for local healthcare services.

His work brought him into regular contact with business owners, advertisers and community organizations across Perth, Smiths Falls and the surrounding region.

When Lake 88.1 was sold to My Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) and rebranded in 2023, Smith remained as general sales manager.



JAMES Smith is well-known to Lanark County business people.

More recently, he also assumed general sales manager responsibilities at MBC's CJET-FM, 92.3 Wow FM, in Smiths Falls.

The assignment brought his career full circle, returning him to the radio station where he had first entered the broadcasting industry decades earlier.

Smith's death prompted expressions of sympathy from colleagues and advertisers who had worked with him over the years.

Local advertiser Jim Lacey paid tribute to their longstanding business relationship.

"It was our pleasure to have worked with James over the years," Lacey said.

Staff at MBC Niagara, a sister radio station, also marked his passing by lighting a candle in his memory.

Away from broadcasting, Smith was devoted to his family and had a particular affection for his dogs, Duke, Eddy, Betty White and Marvin, who were an important part of his life.

He is survived by his wife and best friend, Sara Maveety-Smith; his children, Josh (Meg) Maveety, Morgan (Casey) Brown, Lucas Maveety and Zachary (Natasha) Smith; and his grandchildren, Emma and Maddie.

IN MEMORIAM



MARKS
Robert "Bob"

When I get where I'm going, don't cry for me down here" is the song he wanted played at his funeral. It has been 20 years since it was played and we still cry down here. Missing you forever.

Love,
Carol, Shelley, Matt,
Justine and Robert



Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of a memoriam in this newspaper.

Or, you can call us directly at 514-503-1593. Memoriams are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.

OBITUARIES



ROGERS
James "Jim"

AUG. 6, 1958 – OCT. 21, 2026

Peacefully at the Perth Site of the Perth and Smiths Falls District Hospital, Jim passed away on Wednesday, October 21, 2026 at the age of 68.

He will be sadly missed by his beloved partner of 30 years Valerie St. Onge. Jim will be fondly remembered by his siblings Pauline (late Tom Wilson), Diane (Ken McKay), Joanne (Steven Cordick), Sandra (Charlie MacGregor) and Lawrence (Colleen), and by all his nieces, nephews, extended family and friends. Jim was predeceased by his parents Jim and Shirley (nee Griffith) Rogers.

Jim cherished the years he spent working alongside his dad at the autobody repair shop. After a long day's work, he could often be found unwinding with the boys and enjoying a cold one. These simple pleasures and the memories made along the way will be fondly remembered by all those who knew him.

Friends are invited to visit with the family at the Blair & Son Funeral Home, 15 Gore St. W. Perth on Monday, October 26, 2026 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. Interment will follow at Elmwood Cemetery, Perth.

Those wishing are asked to make memorial contributions to the Lanark Animal Welfare Society (L.A.W.S.) in honour of Jim.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com



WRIGHT
Freeman Scott

JUNE 26, 1923 – SEPT. 28, 2026

It is with heavy hearts, the family of Freeman Wright announce his passing in the Perth hospital on Wednesday October 21st, 2026. He was born to Lorne and Florence (Ferguson) Wright at Clyde Forks on February 2nd, 1947. He is survived by the love of his life for 61 years, Judy (Farrell) Wright; his sister Barb; his children Scott (Marlene), Cindy (Tom) and Shelley (Jim); his grandchildren Stephanie (Jamie), Whitney (Josh), Mallory, Thomas, Davis and Clara; his great grandchildren Grady, Darren, Bowen, Ila, Ember, and Jovie. He is reunited in Heaven with his little angel Tessa, along with his siblings Jean, Norman, Collins, Elsie, Lorne, Lorna, Marion, Ferne, and Johnny.

Freeman was an avid Montreal Canadiens fan who enjoyed many games at the Bell Centre. He loved golfing and his trips to South Carolina, though his favourite pastime was spending time with his family. His gentle disposition was matched only by his sense of humour. Without even knowing it, Freeman had a profound impact on all who knew and loved him. He was a true Lanark County gentleman.

A private funeral service for his immediate family will take place at the Blair & Son Funeral Home, Perth followed by interment in St. Andrews Cemetery, Watsons Corners. Memorial donations to the Perth & Smiths Falls District Hospital Foundation (Perth site) would be appreciated.

Blair & Son Funeral Home
613-267-3765
For condolences or further information, visit our website:
blairandson.com



Ask the funeral director you've chosen to arrange for the placement of an obituary in this newspaper. Or, you can call us directly at 514 503-1593.

Obituaries are taken up until noon on Monday for the edition on Wednesday.



New book titles arrive at Smiths Falls Public Library

The Smiths Falls Public Library has added a selection of new books to its shelves this week, offering readers a variety of fiction, mysteries, thrillers, fantasy and non-fiction.

Among the new arrivals is A Court of Thorns and Roses by Sarah J. Maas, a popular fantasy novel combining romance, adventure and magic. Mystery readers can explore Miss Willmott's Ghosts by Louise Penny, while Barbara Kingsolver's Partita is also featured among the latest additions.

Other titles include The Family by bestselling thriller writer James Patterson and Chain Reaction by Lee Child and Andrew Child, part of the popular Jack Reacher series.

Readers interested in contemporary fiction can look for The Amish Widows Club, while younger readers may enjoy The Pool(s) by E. Lockhart and Up From the Ashes by Sharon Cameron.

The new collection also includes Radio Free Tex by Bray, The Lost Spectacular by Dhali and Anger Is Only a Shadow by Acevedo.

Non-fiction selections include Attention Is the New Currency by Marissa Rachel and Shanna Lisa and Into the Breach by General Wayne.

Residents can browse the new arrivals at the library or reserve titles by telephone, email or through the library's website by selecting "Search Our Catalogue." Library staff will notify borrowers when reserved books are ready for pickup.

News from our neighbours

Highway 7 project adds new turning lane near Innisville

MISSISSIPPI MILLS – Plans to improve Highway 7 between Pauls Road and Carleton Place have been updated to include a new left-turn lane at Innisville Road North, following further engineering studies by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

The change is part of a broader highway improvement project involving resurfacing, intersection upgrades, operational improvements and rehabilitation of existing structures along the busy regional highway.

The ministry has retained engineering firm Egis, formerly McIntosh Perry Consulting Engineers, to complete the preliminary and detailed designs and environmental assessment.

The newly proposed left-turn lane would serve southbound Highway 7 traffic turning onto Innisville Road North, approximately 230 metres north of the Mississippi River Bridge.

The project was initially announced in March 2021, followed by an update in May 2023 and an online public information centre later that year.

Engineering evaluations completed since the public consultation resulted in the additional turning lane being incorporated into the project.

A Transportation Environmental Study Report will document the preferred design, potential environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures.

Once completed, the report will be available for a 30-day public comment period.

Commuter shuttle to Ottawa starts in Carleton Place

CARLETON PLACE: Residents commuting to Ottawa have a new transportation option following the launch of Econobus, a privately operated shuttle service connecting Carleton Place with the nation's capital.

The service began operating earlier this month offering weekday commuters an alternative to driving their own vehicles into downtown Ottawa.

Econobus operates a 16-passenger shuttle, with a morning departure from a pickup location near the Carleton Place arena at 6 a.m. and a return trip departing Ottawa at 3:15 p.m.

The shuttle travels to St. Patrick's Basilica at 220 Kent St. in downtown Ottawa, providing access to the city's central business district and nearby employment destinations.

The service was launched by co-founders Ben and Kritika Edelman, who reported that all 16 seats for October had been sold before operations began, indicating an early demand for the new transportation option.

Econobus offered an introductory monthly fare of $249 plus applicable taxes for October, with the regular monthly fare set at $299 plus taxes.

For commuters, the shuttle offers an opportunity to avoid daily highway driving, rising fuel expenses and the cost of parking a vehicle in downtown Ottawa.

The service is aimed primarily at residents who travel regularly between Carleton Place and Ottawa for employment.

The company has indicated it may consider introducing additional departure times as passenger demand develops.

Perth wants a change to towns' solar energy provincial regulations

PERTH: The Town of Perth is supporting calls for changes to Ontario's electricity regulations that would allow municipalities to make better financial use of renewable energy generated at their own facilities.

At its recent Committee of the Whole meeting, councillors backed efforts to introduce virtual net metering, a system that would allow electricity generated at one municipal property to offset power costs at another location.

Under existing net-metering arrangements, electricity credits are generally tied to the property where the renewable energy is generated.

Virtual net metering would allow municipalities operating several buildings to share the financial benefits of solar installations across their facilities.

For example, electricity generated by solar panels on a municipal building could potentially reduce electricity bills at a recreation centre, library or other town-owned property.

The initiative requires provincial regulatory changes before municipalities could take advantage of the proposed arrangements.

Entertainment & Events

You'll be busy in November

From Halloween comedy and costume parties to Christmas shopping, holiday train rides and festive light displays, Smiths Falls and surrounding communities have a busy calendar of entertainment and activities as autumn gives way to winter.

* * *

October 29 – Paranormal Investigation at the Library: The Smiths Falls Public Library will host a paranormal investigation beginning at 8 p.m. The event offers an unusual opportunity for those interested in ghost stories and unexplained phenomena to explore the supernatural side of a familiar community landmark.

* * *

October 30 – Comedy Night at The Tap Room: An evening of stand-up comedy is scheduled at The Tap Room, 275 Brockville St. Doors open at 7 p.m., with the show beginning at 8 p.m. Advance tickets are $18. Organizers recommend booking early following a previous sold-out performance.

* * *

October 31 – Halloween Dance Party: The Tap Room will exchange punchlines for dance music on Halloween night, hosting a costume party from 7 to 11:30 p.m. The evening includes dancing, entertainment and a costume contest with prizes. Guests are encouraged to wear their most imaginative Halloween outfits.

* * *

Until October 31 – Community Pumpkin Carving Contest: The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum, 11 Old Slys Rd., is inviting families, businesses, schools and individuals to participate in its annual pumpkin carving contest and Pumpkin Walk. A fall-themed prize awaits the winning entry. For information, call 613-283-6311.

* * *

November 1 – Civitan Bingo: The Smiths Falls Civitan Club's monthly Sunday bingo returns with games and prizes. Doors open at 11 a.m., with play beginning at 1 p.m. Bingo is held on the first Sunday of each month.

* * *

November 8 to December 19 – Annual Art Showcase: Smiths Falls will celebrate local artistic talent with an exhibition featuring works by area artists. The annual showcase offers residents an opportunity to appreciate the region's creative community. Details on participating artists and viewing arrangements are available through the town's events calendar.

* * *

November 12 to January 4 – Celebration of Lights: Smiths Falls welcomes the Christmas season with its annual Celebration of Lights. The seasonal display will provide festive illumination through Christmas and New Year's, offering families an opportunity to enjoy a holiday outing.

* * *

November 12 to 21 – REAL's Fall Online Auction: The Rideau Environmental Action League will hold its annual online fundraising auction, featuring close to 200 items, including second-hand treasures, crafts and services donated by community supporters.

Bidding begins November 12 and closes at 9 p.m. November 21. Proceeds support REAL's environmental programs and projects. Successful bidders can collect their purchases beginning November 25 at the REAL Deal Store, 85 William St. W.

Visit www.REALaction.ca for information or 32auctions.com/REAL2026 to participate.

* * *

November 14 – Holiday Fine Art Show and Sale in Kemptville: The North Grenville Arts Guild will present its holiday art show at the North Grenville Municipal Centre, beginning at 10 a.m.

Visitors can browse original paintings, jewellery, woodwork and other handmade creations while enjoying live music and wine from Green Gables Winery. Admission is free. The show offers an opportunity to get an early start on Christmas shopping while supporting regional artists and craftspeople.

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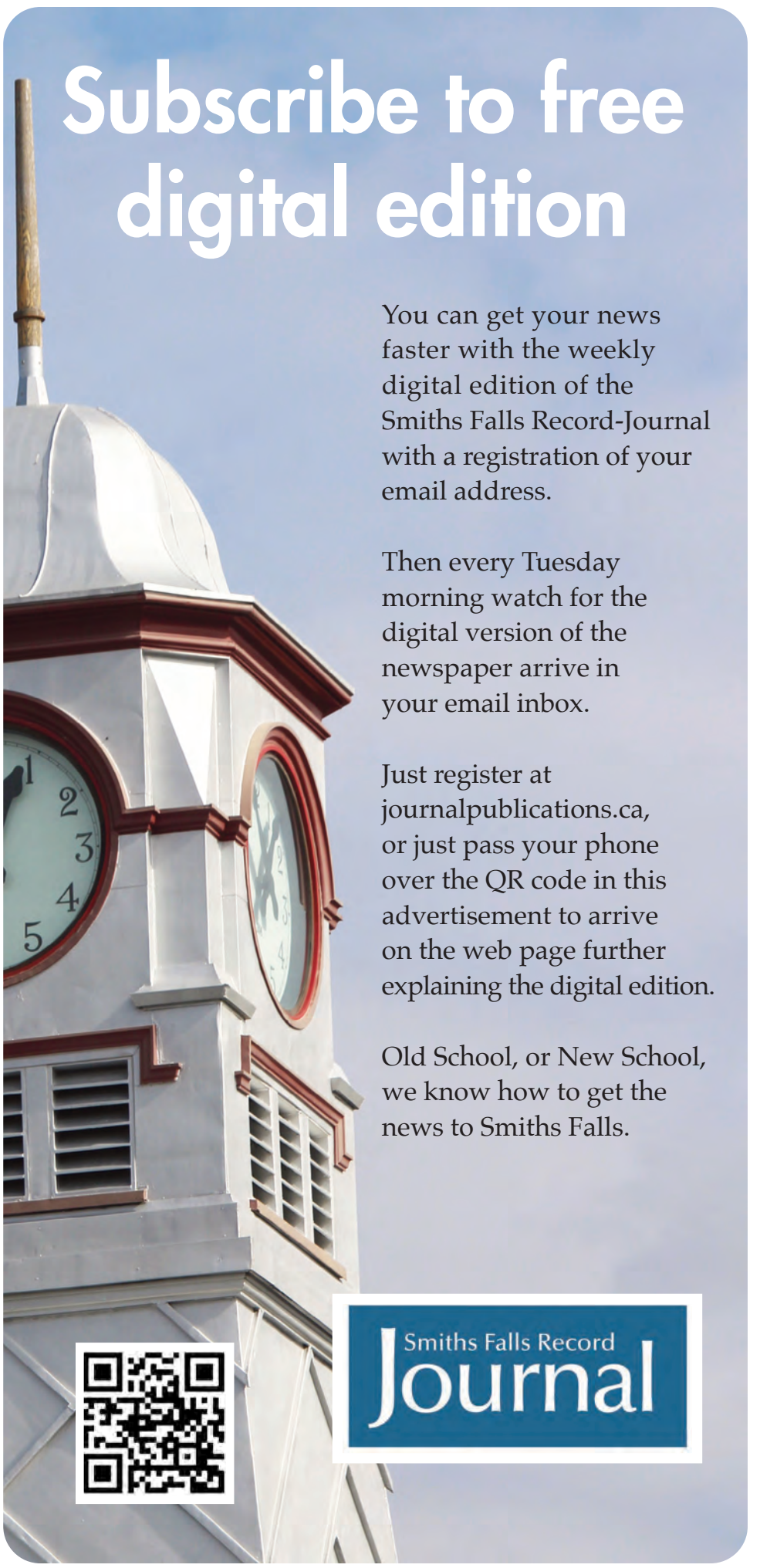
November 19 – Film Night International: The Friends of the Smiths Falls Public Library and Smiths Falls Community Theatre continue their international film series at the Station Theatre, 53 Victoria Ave.

Screenings take place at 2 and 7 p.m. The series is presented through the Toronto International Film Festival's Film Circuit program, bringing independent and international cinema to local audiences.

* * *

November 28 – CPKC Holiday Train: One of the most anticipated Christmas attractions returns to Smiths Falls when the brightly illuminated CPKC Holiday Train arrives at the railway station, 63 Victoria Ave., from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

The decorated train features a travelling stage with live performances by American Authors and Canadian singer-songwriter Tyler Shaw.



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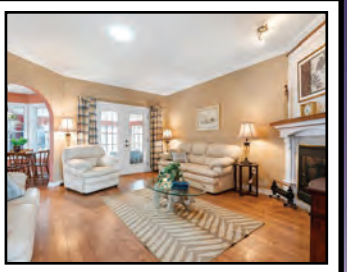




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