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# THE Orléans Star

March 28, 2024 • Volume 38, No. 23

Next edition April 11

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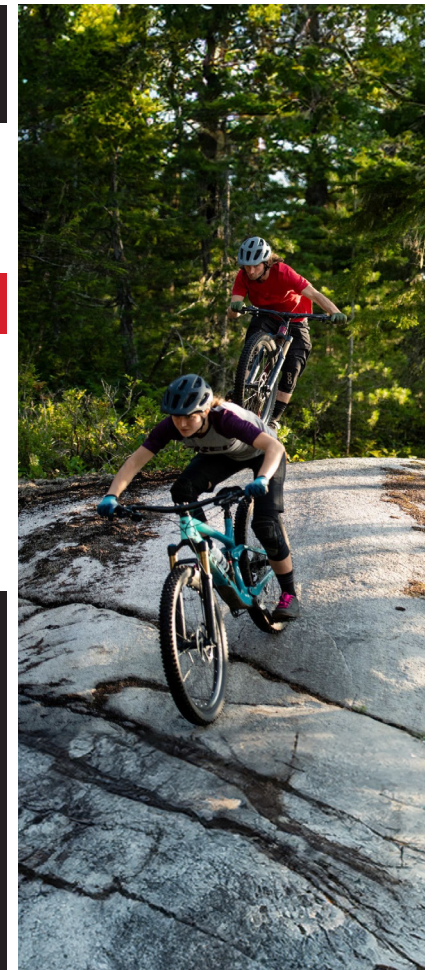
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# VanLife couple arrive at Rocky Mountain foothills

*(Tori Dark and Kevin Nault have embarked on a trip across Canada aboard their converted camper van. In doing so, they are joining hundreds of other people who have taken up what is referred to in the culture as “VanLife”. During their trip, the Orléans Star will publish a series of diary pieces from Tori allowing readers to follow their journey. This is the 10th installment in that series.)*

Welcome to Calgary! Home of the world-famous Calgary Stampede, the Calgary Tower, and the birthplace of Texas Senator, Ted Cruz (that is not a joke, look it up).

Famously known for being one of Canada’s sunniest cities, we were very excited to finally soak up some rays after our very cloudy drive across the country. Unfortunately, we brought the Ontario clouds with us as we didn’t see the sun for another six days. That is practically unheard of in

Calgary! This meant we couldn’t see the mountains either. Yet another delay in our vanlife journey, but let me tell you, it was worth the wait.

We originally decided to make Calgary our first long-term stop because we know many friends and family that have moved here over the last few years. Three fellow Cairine Wilson High School friends, Kevin’s university track coach and mentor, James, and my cousin all live in Calgary. It really is reassuring to have so many people we know and love nearby if we ever need support. This is our first winter in the van and anything could happen.

We arrived in Calgary around midnight and quickly discovered that many of the free overnight parking lots were closed for the winter months. We decided to drive into the mountains and park along the Kananaskis River where we

were lucky to find a boat launch with a level gravel lot and no other vans in sight.

We quickly learned, as we were fast asleep that night, that we were in fact parked directly beside a Canada Railway with a very active schedule. The first train to pass by (whistle and all) scared me so badly that I shot straight up in bed, confused thinking someone hit the van. Turns out the trains are almost hourly and most of them love to toot that whistle. We should have known it was too good to be true.

We proceeded to sleep there for three nights and were surprised every evening as if we didn’t stay there the night before.

But when those clouds broke, the view made up for the lack of sleep. We were within the Bow Valley and surrounded by 360-degree views of snowy peaks and rocky slopes. Kevin looked like a little kid on Christmas morning when looking



PHOTO SUPPLIED

Tori Dark (inset) and Kevin Nault recently arrived in Calgary and the Rocky Mountain foothills.

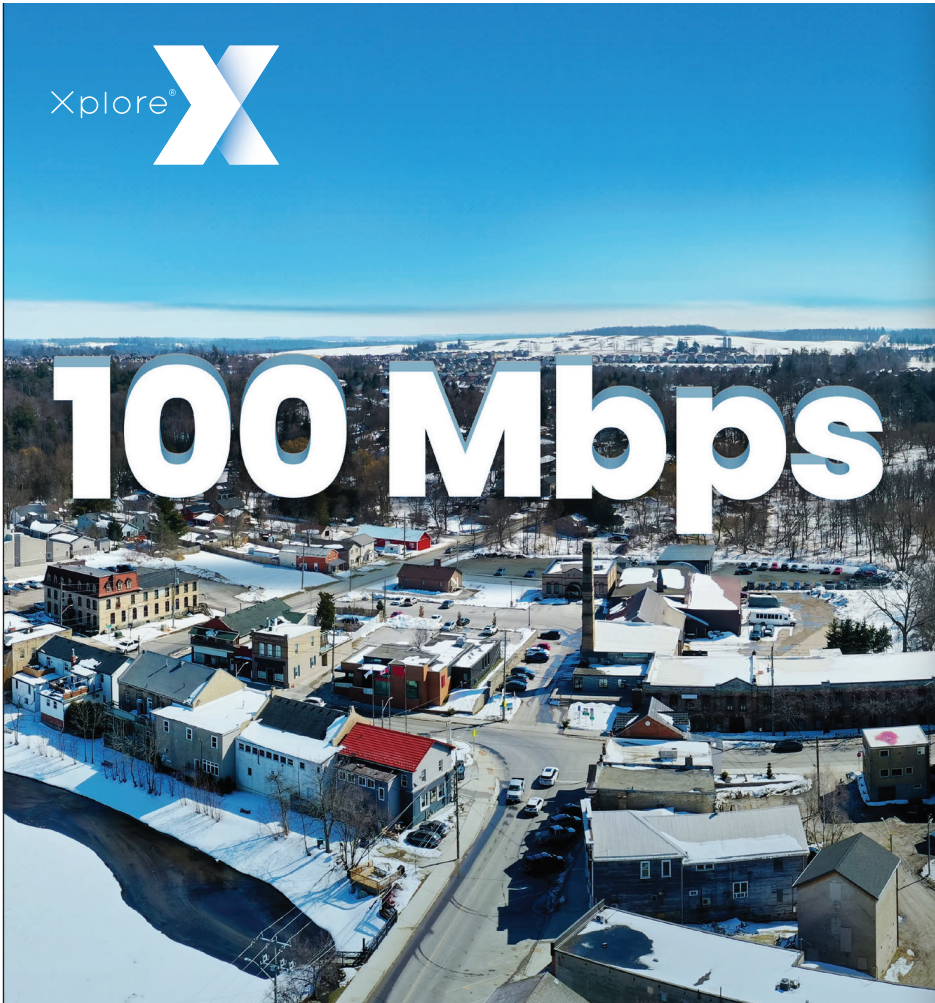
at the ancient Rocky Mountains.


This valley is what convinced him in 2017 that he wanted to buy a van and travel the country.

A global pandemic and seven years later we finally made it back. Now we can begin back-country skiing, hiking, rock climb-

ing, making new friends and exploring the various mountain towns.

*(You can follow Tori and Kevin at [instagram.com/vanxiety\\_life/](https://www.instagram.com/vanxiety_life/). Tori and Kevin are both former students at Cairine Wilson Secondary School, Class of 2012.)*





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# THE Orléans Star

March 28, 2024 • Volume 38, No. 24

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*L'Orléanais*

L'édition de  
cette semaine  
à l'intérieur...



## The Navan maple syrup society

By Fred Sherwin  
The Orléans Star

Every Friday or Saturday night during the month of March, Luc Picknell and a handful of fellow maple syrup lovers get together in his Navan backyard to boil some sap, share a few stories and watch a little TV in his aptly named Navan Tappin' Shack.

"It's better than sitting in the basement. What else are you going to do in March," Picknell asks rhetorically.

Picknell and friends Mathieu Boulianne, Brian Moore, Kyle Edwards, Tim Bernardi and Atti Kisch, and draw sap from maple trees on their own properties as well as some of their neighbours' trees.

Last year, they collected over 3,000 litres of sap

which they turned into 76 litres of maple syrup using a wood-fired evaporator. (Editor's note: The ratio of sap to syrup is 40:1.)

"It was the most we've ever made. The weather was perfect. Warm days, cold nights. You couldn't ask for better," says Picknell

Hoping to build on the success they had last year, the group tapped an additional 20 trees this year. After a fantastic start to the season during the first two weeks of the month, the daytime temperatures took a dip to at or below freezing for much of last week, slowing the flow of sap to a trickle.

Despite the setback, Picknell and the others were hoping to end the season with a bang as temperatures warm up this week.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 ►

Luc Picknell (centre) with some friends in his backyard 'Navan Tappin' Shack'. FRED SHERWIN PHOTO

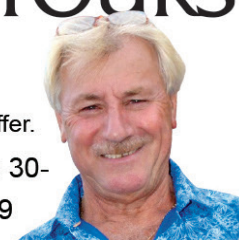


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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Former Cumberland minor hockey coach killed in plane crash



**Vincent Charron**

ORLÉANS – Former Cumberland minor hockey coach Vincent Charron was killed on Feb. 1 when his single-engine plane crashed near Martindale, Quebec about 25km north of Wakefield. Charron, 57, was an experienced pilot who loved everything about aviation. He began his career as a bush pilot and eventual flew commercial planes with Air Alliance. He lived in Orléans with his wife Elaine and their two children. He also had a place on Blue Sea Lake in Quebec. Family members will receive condolences at Saint-Joseph-d'Orléans Parish church, 2757 St. Joseph Blvd., from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 6. A funeral service will follow at 11 a.m.

### City of Ottawa Easter weekend schedule changes

OTTAWA – The City of Ottawa would like to remind residents of the following schedule changes and City service impacts on Good Friday, March 29 and Easter Monday, April 1. The City of Ottawa satellite office on Centrum Blvd. will be closed. There will be no curbside green bin, recycling, garbage or bulky item collection on Friday, March 29 and Monday, April 1. Friday's pick up will take place on Saturday, March 30. Monday's pick up will take place on Tuesday, April 2. All other collection will be delayed by one day for the remainder of the week. OC Transpo bus service and O-Train Line 1 will run on a Sunday schedule on Friday, March 29 and on a reduced weekday schedule on Monday, April 1. All City-operated museums and Shenkman Arts Centre will be closed on Friday, March 29 and Monday, April 1. All Ottawa Public Library branches will be closed on Friday, March 29 and Monday, April 1. Some indoor pools, arenas, and recreation and fitness centres will be open or operating on a modified schedule. Please check [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca) for details.

## Syrup-making process a very sociable affair

Continued from page 1

No matter how much sap they collect, or syrup they end up with, the process is all about camaraderie, friendship and community spirit.

Whenever they get together to boil the sap, it's very much a family affair with everyone's spouses and kids all taking part.

One of the newest additions to the group are the Wilsons, Danny and Brigitte. The couple was approached by Luc last year who asked them if he could tap their trees. He ended up taping all 12 trees on their property. As a result they ended with six 16-ounce jars of pure maple syrup. They're not sure how much they will end with this year – it all goes toward the total amount of syrup produced which will be shared between everyone who takes part in the process – but whatever it is they will enjoy every drop of the liquid gold.

"We love maple syrup, especially the kids" Danny says, referring to the couple's three children. "Our kids just drown their pancakes in syrup. We'll go through a jar in three seatings."

Having experienced the entire process



**Danny Wilson**

from tapping to boiling and reducing the sap from 40 to 1, Danny and Brigitte have a newfound appreciation for what goes into producing maple syrup from sap. It also makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to ever use store-bought syrup again.

"Now that we're apart of this, we'll never go back to anything else," says Brigitte.



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# Orléans woman, armed forces member a total ‘gamer’

By Fred Sherwin  
The Orléans Star

When Second Lieutenant Roxanne Ibrahim suffered an injury in 2020 and was forced to work from home during the COVID 19 pandemic, she turned to her love of the Call of Duty video game to fill her free time.

Ibrahim has always been into video games ever since she was a young girl. In fact, it was the Call of Duty franchise that lead to her to joining the military in the first place.

“My shooting was really good; my tactics were really good. I thought, where can I do this and also travel? I thought I’d go into a job like Call of Duty... which ended up being the military. It was perfect,” says Ibrahim who plays online under the handle MizzWhisky.

Little did Ibrahim realize that all that game time would eventually pay off with her making the RCAF Call of Duty team – yes, there is such a thing – last summer.

Ibrahim entered a DND tournament on a whim and ended up finishing in second place along with her playing partner, Cpl. Jules Deslaurier.

The result earned the pair a spot on the

national RCAF team which was invited to take part in the COD Endowment Bowl in Los Angeles in October.

In the past, the Endowment Bowl, which benefits military veterans, has always been a bilateral affair between the various branches of the United States and the United Kingdom militaries. 2023 was the first year that a team from Canada was invited to take part, and Ibrahim was the only female qualifier

When the competition started there were 10 teams in total with each team augmented by professional gamers and influencers.

The Canadian RCAF team was made up of Ibrahim and Deslauriers along professional gamer, Smixie, from Toronto, and Cpl. Brendan Jatsura and Ryan Mezei, who is a military firefighter, they were teamed up with Canadian gamer and influencer Natarsha.

The rest of the team included alternate Alex Clark and Nancy Coelho, founder and chairwoman of Game Force, who handled all the administrative duties.

For Call of Duty: Warzone aficionados, the tournament was played in a mini battle royale format that forces players to compete to be the last ones standing in a continuously



Roxanne Ibrahim holds up the Endowment Bowl trophy as her RCAF COD teammates look on. ACTIVISION PHOTO

shrinking map over four rounds.

Each team was divided into two duos who played with an influencer/professional gamer. Some of the best COD professionals in the U.S. were on the American teams.

Canada ended up winning the tournament

using superior strategy.

“We put one squad inside the landing zone and one squad outside and worked together.. No one else had any real strategy. We were very surprised,” says Ibrahim. “It made our job a lot easier.”

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# Long-term care crisis

Ontario is suffering from a crisis in long-term care. To be more precise, the province is still suffering from a chronic shortage of long-term care facilities as evident by recent reports that nearly 300 people have been moved from hospitals to long-term care homes not of their choosing during the past 12 months.

According to the Ontario Long Term Care Home Association, one in five seniors over the age of 80 have complex care needs that require long-term care. Despite the fact that there are more than 76,000 long-term care beds in the province, some 43,000 seniors were on waiting lists for long-term care as of January 1, 2024. The number has nearly doubled over the past 10 years and it is expected to grow by 1,000 people per year for the next several years.

The extensive waiting list means that the average senior requiring long-term care will wait 126 days to access a bed, with some waiting up to 2.5 years. Many seniors will die before ever getting the long-term care they need.

The biggest reason the waiting list is outpacing the creation of nearly 1,000 long-term care beds a year is the fact that Ontario's population is continuing to age at a dizzying rate. The number of people over the age of 80 grew from 663,730 in 2011 to 517,910 in 2021. That's an increase of 14,582 per year every year for 10 straight years.

The other problem long-term care is facing in Ontario is the labour shortage in the health care sector. You can build all the long-term care facilities and create all the long-term care beds you want, but if you can't staff them, it's a waste of time. By 2029, Ontario long-term care homes will require at least 58,600 more nurses and personal support workers to support residents in new long-term care spaces. That is more than double the current nursing and personal support workforce.

Because of the disparity between long-term care beds in Ontario and the number of seniors with high care needs, many seniors end up being "housed" in local hospitals. In 2022, an estimated 2,400 seniors requiring long-term care were being kept in hospitals. That number got as low as 1,300 last year. Although the current number is not available, it must be relatively high to necessitate relocating 300 of them to long-term care facilities not of their choosing and often 50-75 kms away.

The inability of the long-term care sector to keep pace with the number of seniors needing institutional long-term care, means the responsibility to care for those folks will fall on their families who won't have the ability or capacity to do so.

To say long-term care in Ontario is in dire straits with a bleak future is a gross understatement. More needs to be done. A strategy needs to be developed, funds allocated, and a government put in place that is willing to carry it out for the good of everyone.

— Fred Sherwin, editor

TYPICAL FAMILY  
GETTING READY  
FOR THE SOLAR  
ECLIPSE



## Montfort Hospital investment to help military patients

On March 1, I had the privilege of hosting my 10th International Women's Day breakfast at the Rendez-Vous des aînés francophones d'Ottawa (RAFO), where 120 women from all walks of life gathered.

Moreover, I presented 38 amazing individuals with the Orléans Leading Women and Young Girls Recognition 2024 Award for their community engagement. Congratulations once again! Thanks to everyone who took the time to nominate this year's recipients.

During March, the Month of Francophonie, we recognize the cultural and linguistic contributions made by our Francophone communities in Orléans, Canada, and across the world, with March 20 marking International Francophonie Day. I had the pleasure of attending diverse events, such as the Gala de la Francophonie held on March 15, where local residents Nicole and Louis Patry were recognized with the "Prix Champlain Fondateur de la Francophonie 2024" for their 40 years of engagement in promoting the French language as well as for creating our local French paper, *L'Orléanais*, published monthly within the *Orléans Star*. Congratulations!

The École secondaire publique Gisèle Lalonde also reached a milestone in celebrating 20 years of French education in our community on March 22.

On March 14, I joined the amazing management team at Walmart Innes for their grand re-opening. It was great to see the new layout and improvements to

the store. It was also an opportunity to recognize their contribution to our local economy and their support for thousands of employees and their families. Thank you for being a community leader.

I hope everyone had a wonderful St. Patrick's Day! I was delighted to join our local Royal Canadian Legion for their St. Patrick lunch on March 17.

On March 20, as Parliamentary Secretary of National Defence, I joined Minister Bill Blair to announce a \$100 million

extension of our partnership with Montfort Hospital to ensure the Canadian Armed Forces receive quality healthcare, solidifying our commitment until 2032.

The following day, on March 21, I had the honour to rise in the house to present Bill C-66, which will reaffirm the government's dedication to fostering a more inclusive, respectful, and safe workplace for our military to thrive.

I especially want to thank the 16 members of my Youth Council 2023-2024 for their leadership and insightful contributions this past year. For the interested youth aged from 15 to 25 years old, we will be opening the application process in the coming weeks for the cohort 2024-2025. Stay tuned!

Happy Easter to everyone celebrating and have a wonderful long weekend with your family and friends!

**\*\*La version française est maintenant disponible sur ma page Facebook\*\***



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# Young cancer victims a lifelong inspiration

Erin Gannon, Karyne Maisonneuve and Hannah Billings – three young ladies who lost their lives to cancer at a very young age,

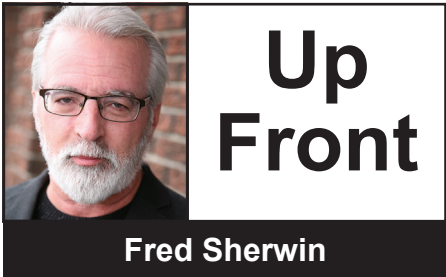
Erin Gannon passed away on April 6, 2004 at the age of 18. Karyne Maisonneuve passed away due to complications with her cancer treatment on July 12, 2006. She was just nine years old. And Hannah Billings passed away on Jan. 17, 2007 at the age of 10.

I'm sure there have been other kids in Orléans whose lives were cut short by cancer over the past 20 years, but I knew and wrote about Erin, Karyne and Hannah, and I've met their families.

I bring their names up now, for one, because they should never be forgotten, and because, collectively, they have been one of the greatest inspirations on my life.

Having covered their individual battles with cancer and the heroism they displayed throughout their struggle, it dawned on me that I had been wasting the precious time God had given me on this earth.

That thunderbolt of self-realization occurred just after I thought about how brave these young women were in battling the disease and going through the many chemotherapy and radiation treatments they had to go



through. I also came to the realization that each of them possessed more wisdom in their pinkie fingers than most adults acquire in their entire lives.

This period of self-realization started with Erin and became more crystalized after the passing of Karyne and Hannah.

It dawned on me that to waste a single minute of my life would be an insult to all three young ladies and every other young person who has passed away from a terminal illness before and since.

Erin, Karyne and Hannah never got to live and experience a life beyond their young years, however, they all left a legacy that endures to this day.

Erin inspired the inaugural St. Matthew High School Bear Hug which at the time set a Guinness Record as the largest group hug in

the world involving 5,117 students hugging for 10 seconds. The event raised more than \$108,000, setting a new Canadian record for cancer fundraising by a high school.

The Bear Hug record was later eclipsed by a group in New Mexico in 2007 which stood up until St. Matt's reclaimed the title in May 2010 when 10,554 participants accomplished the feat and raised over \$500,000 for cancer patient care and research in the process. The record still stands to this day.

After Karyne passed away, her family raised the necessary funds and local business support to build a wind turbine and solar greenhouse at École secondaire publique Gisèle-Lalonde.

Entitled Project Karyne, the greenhouse has been at the centre of the school's environmental program and ecological clubs for years and has no doubt helped inspire students in furthering their environmental and ecological studies after graduating.

After Hannah passed away, her family established the Hannah Billings Fund which raises money through the Navan Lions Club, the Navan Women's Institute and the Navan Fair demolition derby to help sick children and their families deal with the

consequences of serious childhood illness or disability.

All three young ladies were an inspiration during their individual battles with cancer and have continued to inspire others since their passing, myself included, and I have done my utmost to inspire others in their memory.

Since I stay in hostels during most of my travels I tend to meet a lot of young people, some of whom ask me to share some small piece of wisdom with them and each time I share with them the story of Erin, Karyne and Hannah, and explain how I try to honour their memories by not wasting a single moment of whatever time I have left on this planet. It's one of the reasons why I travel so much. It's also one of the reasons why I try to watch what I eat and stay in the best shape I can, along with wanting to eventually meet my grandchildren, whenever that may be.

Hopefully by telling their stories and explaining how and why they've inspired me, I might be able to help and inspire others to stop sleepwalking through life and instead follow their dreams, or at the very least take the first steps in fulfilling whatever dreams and ambitions they may have.

Spring

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# Egg-stravaganza event a wonderful warmup for Easter

This past weekend, I hosted my 3rd Annual Egg-stravaganza at the Orléans Fruit Farm. It was an incredibly fun time, thank you to everyone who was able to come out!

There is nothing like seeing the joy on children's faces as they run out into the orchard, baskets in hand, in a hunt to find as many eggs as they can, not to mention when the Easter Bunny hops over for a special visit!

The Orléans Fruit Farm is one of my favourite locations in Orléans. Not only is it a gorgeous space, but it is also full of rich culture and history, and a place where many of us have made memories with our families over the years. I am pleased that the Egg-stravaganza event can become another one of those memories for the many families that have made my egg hunt part of their annual traditions.

One of my favourite aspects of being your city councillor is getting to spend time at events that bring residents and families together to celebrate what makes our com-

munity the incredible place we all love.

I want to give a special thank you to Rendez-vous des aînés francophones d'Ottawa, Kiwanis Eastern Ottawa, Myers

Automotive, Ottawa Fire Services and the Orléans Fruit Farm for supporting this exciting annual event, as well as all those who came out again this year to make more special memories together.

On another note, as we wrap up *Mois de la Francophonie*, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge a recent major accomplishment of the infamous Orléans dynamic duo, Louis and Nicole Patry who were recently awarded le Prix Champlain Fondateur de la Francophonie 2024 for their significant contributions to promoting the visibility of the Francophone community.

Active for more than 40 years, they have been fundamental in creating the French-speaking community newspaper *L'Orléanais*, as well as their contributions in publishing the recent "L'histoire derrière la toponymie française d'Orléans". Bra-vo!



**Laura Dudas**

Innes Ward 2

# Spring has sprung and so has the effort to Clean the Capital

Spring has sprung and spring cleaning has begun! It's that time of year when many of us deep clean and declutter our homes, and it's that time of year the City gets a spring cleaning as well.

The Roads and Parking Services team have started cleaning our transportation network. The crews have begun street sweeping arterial roads, sidewalks, bus stops and medians throughout the city using sidewalk sweepers, leaf blowers, flusher trucks and hand brooms. Crews continue their work on temporary pothole repairs.

Since January over 700 crews have filled over 46,900 potholes! This is an increase of 30% compared to the same period last year when 35,983 potholes were filled. For residents wishing to report a pothole, a service request can be created online at <https://ottawa.ca/en/3-1-1/report-or-request/road-and-sidewalk-maintenance/report-pothole-road>.

Registration is now open for "Cleaning the Capital". Join thousands of residents in

helping keep our community spaces clean and green.

A big thank you to all our neighbours who

volunteer their time to keep our communities clean each year during this City campaign. It is estimated that over one million kilograms of waste has been removed by more than 1.4 million

volunteers since the campaign began in 1994. Cleanup kits are available upon request at select municipal facilities across the city. To learn more about the campaign or to register your project, visit [ottawa.ca/clean](http://ottawa.ca/clean).

Have any gently-used household items you want to part with? The Helping With Furniture (HWF) provides furniture and household goods, refurbished bicycles and laptops to people in need in Ottawa.

For over 15 years HWF has helped refugees, recent immigrants, and people relocating from shelters, leaving abusive situations, struggling with mental illness or at risk of homelessness. To learn more, visit <https://www.hwfottawa.org/>.



**Tim Tierney**

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# Turkish Village Dining Lounge remains a culinary jewel in Orléans

By Jody Maffett  
The Orléans Star

After more than 32 years, the Little Turkish Village Dining Lounge on St. Joseph Blvd. is still serving up delicious food including some of the best beef, chicken and lamb kebabs in town and the very best lamb burger anywhere, according to *Orléans Star* publisher Fred Sherwin.

If it is traditional Turkish food you are looking for, then look no further than Little Turkish Village.

Turkish cuisine is one of the first examples of fusion cuisine in the culinary history of the world. It is heavily influenced by a rich history and traditions because Turkey was a gateway on the silk road for caravans heading east and west. When you sit down to enjoy Turkish food, you can find trace of dozens of cuisines from central Asia all the way to Europe.

Besides the kebabs and lamb burger, the dinner menu includes such Turkish delights as Yougourtlu Shish Kofte, which is charcoal-broiled ground beef marinated in Turkish spices and rolled. It is then sliced and served on top of yogurt made in-house and garnished with a small skewer of lamb

kebab.

Other mouth-watering delicacies include Classic Pirzola lamb chops; the Fillet of Sole, the Turkish Balik which is a Rainbow Trout fillet seasoned with Turkish spices and charcoal-grilled, and chicken wings made Turkish Village style.

And no meal at Little Turkish Village would be complete without dessert, which includes homemade baklava, katif, mango fruit pudding and home-made cheesecake. To help make your experience even more authentic, enjoy a traditional Turkish coffee with your desert.

Owner Sunil Kurishh and his staff are dedicated to providing their customers with friendly and attentive service in their newly renovated and air-conditioned dining room.

The restaurant also welcomes a professional belly dancer three or four times a year. The events have become extremely popular among regulars and first-timers alike.

The Little Turkish Village Dining Lounge is located at the corner of St. Joseph Blvd. and Grey Nuns Avenue. They are open for both lunch and dinner from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday to Thursday; 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. on



Little Turkish Village owner Sunil Kurishh, pictured here with his wife Anjum, is committed to providing his customers with an authentic dining experience which will transport them to the shores of the Bosphorus. FILE PHOTO

Friday; 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday; and 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Sunday.

You can also enjoy your favourite Turkish Village dish at home by ordering directly

through their website at [turkishvillage.ca](http://turkishvillage.ca) or by calling 613-824-5557. You can pick it up yourself or use any of the popular delivery services.



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# The 2023 Outstanding Youth Award recipients

During the coming weeks and months, the *Orléans Star* will publish the profiles of last year's *Orléans Outstanding Youth Award* recipients. The award program is held by the *Orléans Star* every fall and is open to youth from age five to 18. The award ceremony was held on Jan. 7, 2024 with 22 recipients in attendance.

## Selena Pang, 18

Selena Pang is a Grade 12 student at St. Matthew High School where she has been a member of the Gold Honour Roll for the past two years and has been a dedicated member of student council. Away from school, Selena has been recognized as a national high-performance rhythmic gymnast since 2019. She has represented Canada in several international tournaments, such as the Slovakia Christmas Nitra Cup in 2019 and the Aphrodite Cup in Greece in 2023. In addition to her athletic pursuits, Selena has a deep passion for music. She obtained her full level 8 certification in piano in 2022 and successfully passed the level 9 practical exam in 2023. She is a certified coach in training for rhythmic gymnastics and finds joy in coaching young girls. She volunteers to coach gymnasts and assists with her club's annual rhythmic gymnastics competition. For her many accomplishments both inside and outside the classroom, Selena Pang has been selected as a recipient of this year's *Orléans Outstanding Youth Awards*.



## Emily Rafter, 17

Emily Rafter is a student at Cairine Wilson Secondary School where last year she received the school's LINK Leadership Award after achieving a 97% average in the course and she won the Student Council CPR Award for commitment, pride and respect. As a member of the school's Key Club she helped organize the Halloween for Hunger food drive and Purses of Hope. Purses of Hope was a project to collect new or used purses and fill them with personal and hygiene items for distribution to homeless women in Ottawa. Emily also took on a management role at both the regional and provincial high school wrestling tournaments. Finally, Emily headed up the planning and execution of the regional elementary school track and field championships. The event required four months of planning and involved student participants from over 20 schools. She was responsible for the planning, logistics, security and safety of all those in attendance. Unfortunately, the event was postponed due to poor air quality from the wildfires. As a result, she had to rapidly re-plan the event for two weeks later which was also the day before her Grade 12 exams. The event was a huge success and she successfully completed her exams. Outside of school, Emily was heavily involved in the The Pepper Pod Women's Veteran's Retreat Centre, the Wreaths Across Canada project, Ottawa Race Weekend and the Together We Stand Foundation. For excelling in a leadership role and her extensive volunteerism, Emily Rafter has been selected as a recipient of this year's *Orléans Outstanding Youth Awards*.



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# Aura Design: Your home theatre and Smart Home specialists

By Fred Sherwin  
The Orléans Star

If you want to take your home entertainment experience to the next level then you need to see the folks at Aura Design on Youville Drive in Orléans.

Founded by former StereoPlus consultants Stéphane Doucet and Andrew Davies in 2018, Aura Design has a well-earned reputation for delivering a first class experience to their clients, which they stand behind long after the sale is completed.

Aura Design specializes in the latest in home entertainment components and integrated Smart Home technology. Starting with Sony and Samsung televisions; Epson and JVC projector systems; and Paradigm, Sonos and Bowers and Wilkins sound bars and speakers, Aura Design has everything you need to create the ultimate home theatre experience that will be the envy of your family and friends.

Aura Design is the exclusive dealer of B&W speakers, including the legendary Diamond 800 series of speakers, in Ottawa. They are also an authorized dealer of Kaleidescape: The Ultimate Movie Platform.

Kaleidescape movies are downloaded to a

movie server in your home and played back on Ultra 4K HDR movie players which can be located throughout the house. The service features access to more than 12,000 movies, including many first run movies, and 2,000 television seasons for people who are ultra serious about their movie viewing.

You can check out all the various home theatre products Aura Design has to offer, including Kaleidescape, by visiting their state-of-the-art showroom.

And for those people who are simply looking for a new TV, Aura Design's prices are competitive with both Costco or Best Buy.

"Our prices are the same as the big box stores, but we have more knowledge and better service," says Davies.

And while Aura Design has a full line of home theatre components, their specialty is Smart Home integration. Whether it's part of a new home build, or retrofitting your existing home, Aura Design has the expertise to integrate your Smart Home devices, home entertainment components and surveillance and security system into a single network that you can control through your Smart phone.

The goal behind all of their projects



The Aura Design team can help take your home theatre and Smart Home experience to the next level using the latest state-of-the-art components and home automation technology. PHOTO SUPPLIED

is to create tailored technology solutions that facilitate and elevate their clients' day-to-day lifestyles. The Aura Design team of smart home professionals will work with you to craft unique solutions tailored precisely to match your vision, no matter how big or small.

The first step on the journey to realizing your home theatre and Smart Home dreams is to visit the Aura Design showroom at 1344 Youville Dr., across from Pathway Hyundai.

To find out more about Aura Design visit their website at [aura-design.ca](http://aura-design.ca),

Visit our state-of-the-art showroom today and experience the latest in home theatre technology

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## Former Jr. Grad wins CCHL Sportsmanship Award

By Fred Sherwin  
The Orléans Star

Former Cumberland Jr. Grads forward Kyle Leonard was recently named as this year's recipient of the Central Canada Hockey League's Sportsmanship and Ability Award.

Playing in his third year with the Rockland Nationals, Leonard leads the team offensively with 21 goals and 37 assists in 53 games.

Off the ice, Leonard has been a great role model for all his teammates, says Nationals head coach Justin Pereira.

"From an off-ice perspective, he is a man of true character and extremely cares for his teammates," says Pereira.

Leonard shows his discipline and dedication each day with managing both hockey and his studies. He is currently taking part-time university classes at the University of Ottawa in engineering while earning over 80 per cent average.

According to Pereira, Leonard has played a vital role in Rockland's success this season.

"He is an exceptional 200-foot center



**Kyle Leonard**

who plays in every situation. Kyle possesses elite top end speed and is one of the leagues best defensive forwards with his work ethic, and relentless pace."

Leonard began playing hockey with the Cumberland Minor Hockey Association and soon progressed to the Cumberland Jr. Grads competitive program where he played for the U14, U15 and U16 AA teams.

In 2019 he made the Rockland Nationals U18 AAA team and racked up 27 points.

After the 2020-2021 season was canceled due to the COVID pandemic, Leonard graduated to the Junior A squad.

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# April is tribute month at the Shenkman Arts Centre

By Jody Maffett  
The Orléans Star

The Shenkman Arts Centre will be hosting three award-winning tribute bands in April that will pay homage to three of the biggest selling acts of the past 50 years.

The Australian BeeGees will kick things off on Thursday, April 4, when they bring their popular Las Vegas revue to the Harold Shenkman Hall stage,



One of the most successful and adored acts in musical history is recreated live in concert with hits like “Staying Alive”, “You Should Be Dancing”, “How Deep Is Your Love”, and “Jive Talkin” bound to get you out of your seat and dancing in the aisle.

A limited number of tickets are still available at the Shenkman Art Centre’s online box office.

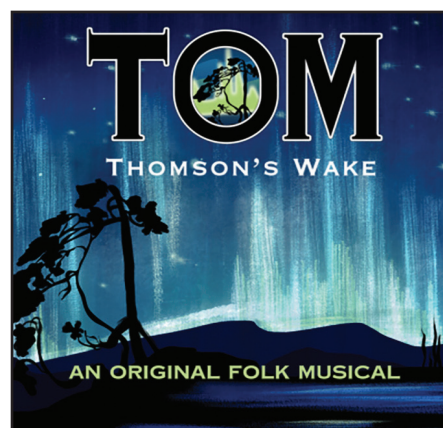
The following day, the Bruce Springsteen tribute band Tommy Youngsteen will be in town to perform Springsteen’s classic 1984 album “Born in the USA” along with other hits, featuring a 10-piece all-star band.

Tommy Youngsteen is a Toronto-based supergroup featuring members & alum from Juno winning bands - Stars, The Arkells, Sam Roberts Band, The Trews, Lowest of The Low, July Talk & Serena Ryder Band.

Plenty of tickets are still available for this show at the Shenkman Arts Centre online box office. The cost is \$59.50.

If the BeeGees and Bruce Springsteen aren’t your cup of tea, then perhaps U2 is. The U2 tribute band LOVEU2 will be making a stop in Orléans for two shows on Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27.

Brace yourself for an unforgettable night of U2 hits and high-energy performances. Immerse yourself in a mind-blowing experience as LOVEU2 brings the extraordinary legacy of U2 to life. Feel the pulsating beats, witness the iconic costumes, and get whisked away to the realm of the world’s most beloved band. From their



early days to present with fan fave hits like, “Sunday Bloody Sunday”, “Pride (In the Name of Love)”, “Beautiful Day”, “Vertigo”, and “Where the Streets Have No Name”, just to name a few.

This is more than just a concert, it’s a celebration of U2’s legendary music that spans generations.

Tickets are \$59 each and are available at shenkmanarts.ca.

Other performances in April include the Tara Luz Dance production of “Les Bâtons” on Saturday, April 6; “Tom Thomson’s Wake – An Original Folk Musical” featuring the shared memories of Thomson’s friend, his



mentor, and his lover to a folk music score by the Shipyard Kitchen Party band on Friday, April 19; and world music from South Asian singer Kiran Ahluwalia on Thursday April 25.

Finally, the Ottawa School of Theatre will present an all-ages production of “Treasure Island” in the intimate confines of the Richcraft Theatre on April 18, 19, 20 and 21. The two shows on April 18 and 19 will start at 6:30 p.m., while the two shows on April 20 and 21 will take place at 1:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for people 25 and under. They can be purchased online at ost-eto.com.



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# 13-year-old gymnast wins first international medal

By Fred Sherwin  
The Orléans Star

2024 maybe less than three months old, but it has already been a very good year for 13-year-old gymnast Samantha Couture.

The Tumblers Gymnastics Centre member placed seventh overall in the junior high-performance division at the Elite Canada meet in Langley, B.C. last month, which included a third place performance on beam.

She followed that up with an 11th place performance competing as the second youngest athlete in the Challenge Gymnix category at an international Gymnix meet held in Montréal earlier this month.

As a result of her performance in Langley, Couture was invited to compete at the German Gymnastics Team Challenge event in Stuttgart, Germany on March 15-17 as part of Canada’s junior women’s team and helped them place fourth overall. Canada’s senior team also placed fourth.

Although the meet is a team event with male and female teams from different countries competing against each other at the senior and junior levels, there is also an individual component where the top eight athletes on each apparatus compete for individual medals.

Couture competed on the balance beam where she placed second, earning her first international medal. Fellow Canadian Stella Letendre placed second on floor and Lia Remick finished fourth on vault and sixth on uneven bars.

It’s a remarkable achievement for Couture who only joined the Tumblers last September after several years training and competing at Unigym in Gatineau.

Couture’s coach, Stéphane McNicoll, who is also a Unigym transplant, can’t say enough about Couture’s progression since the two started working together just six short months ago. Since joining Tumblers, Couture has had to learn new routines and adapt to new training methods, all of which she has done at a truly extraordinary level.

According to both athlete and coach, Couture was hoping a change of scenery and coaching methods would take them to the next level.

Remarkably, Couture and McNicoll only started working together after they had both joined Tumblers. It was purely serendipitous.

“Coaching Sam is not very difficult, to be honest,” says McNicoll, who feels fortunate indeed to be working with Couture. “It’s a



Tumblers gymnast Samantha Couture wears her silver medal as she is flanked by her coach Stéphane McNicoll and fellow Tumblers WAG coach Anic Bellerose Daneault. FRED SHERWIN PHOTO

gift. It’s like a nice Christmas present.”  
Couture’s next big meet will be the Canadian senior and junior championships which will be held in Gatineau from June 3-9, where she will be hoping to improve on her 15th place overall performance at last year’s nationals.  
In 2022, Couture placed third overall and won the beam event competing in the novice division.





# Spring activities

# Activités du printemps

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## COMMUNITY BILLBOARD

**SATURDAY, MARCH 30**

**THE STRAY DOG BREWING COMPANY** presents Dan Kelly with special guest Ryan King from 7 p.m. at 501 Lacolle Way in the Taylor Creek Business Park. For more information visit [straydogbrewing.ca](http://straydogbrewing.ca).

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3**

**THE STRAY DOG BREWING COMPANY** presents Taproom Trivia from 6:30 p.m. at 501 Lacolle Way in the Taylor Creek Business Park. For more information visit [facebook.com/StrayDogBrewingCompany](https://facebook.com/StrayDogBrewingCompany)

**THE ORLÉANS BREWING CO.** presents Oyster Wednesdays every Wednesday Co. is located at 4380 Innes Rd. near the Innes Road McDonalds.

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**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3**

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**SATURDAY, APRIL 6**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 7**

**53rd ANNUAL MAPLEFEST** hosted by the Cumberland Lions

Club from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Lions Maple Hall, 2552 Old Montreal Rd. in Cumberland Village. Tickets \$12 for adults and \$8 for children under 10. Includes pancakes, sausages, maple syrup, tea/coffee, hot chocolate and orange juice.

**MONDAY, APRIL 8**

**STEAL MY SUNSHINE PARTY** at the Stray Dog Brewing Company, 501 Lacolle Way in the Taylor Creek Business Park. Come celebrate the solar eclipse from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 23**

**GRANDMAS AIDING GRANDMAS** 10th Annual Card Party from 12:30 - 4 p.m. at St. Helen's Church, 1234 Prestone Dr. Tickets \$35 includes lunch, door prizes, raffle and market. Call Barbara at 613-824-3524 or Sue at 613-834-4706.

## IN MEMORIAM

**George Oehring, 71**

**Passed away on March 16, 2024**

**Andre Norman Corbeil, 79**

**Passed away on March 15, 2024**

**Geoffrey Green, 73**

**Passed away on March 14, 2024**



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