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THE Orléans Star

November 23, 2023 • Volume 38, No. 14

Next edition December 7

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Gina Mertikas, right, and her mother Katerina have raised over \$40,000 to help fund clinical trials for breast cancer through the first five editions of their calendar. PHOTO SUPPLIED

Locally created Calendar of Hope in its 6th edition

By Fred Sherwin
The Orléans Star

It's been seven years since Orléans resident and mother of three, Gina Mertikas-Lacvitoire was a breast cancer patient at the Ottawa Hospital. It's been six years since Gina and her mother Katerina first produced a calendar using Katerina's brilliant artwork to help raise funds for clinical trial research.

Since then the dynamic duo have produced a series of five calendars and raised over \$40,000 in the process. The money has been put to good use, helping to fund a clinical trial that has revolutionized a certain type of treatment now used around the world.

"Every year and every development brings more hope that a breakthrough will be made in treating breast cancer, which is why we call them Calendars of Hope," says Gina.

Seven years ago, a grateful Gina was looking for a way to give back after her successful cancer treatment.

"After my treatment was done, and I was told that I would be able to watch my children grow up, that's when I put the wheels in motion to help others," says Mertikas-Lacvitoire. "I asked my oncologist, Dr. Mark Clemons — who's one of the best doctors in the world — 'how can I give back?' I needed to do something to give back."

Fortunately Gina's mother, Katerina, is an accomplished artist with an established following in Ottawa and around the country. The two women put their heads together and the idea of printing an art calendar was born.

The calendars are as popular as ever, largely due to Katerina's beautiful artwork and the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 ►



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Vintage Village of Lights to open this weekend

ORLÉANS – The Vintage Village of Lights is returning to the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum starting this weekend and running every weekend until Dec. 17. Over the next three weeks, the museum grounds will be turned into a magical light display with thousands of lights festooning the buildings and trees. Visitors will be able to step back in time to the 1920s and 30s and stroll through the postcard-perfect scenery while taking in the 30,000-plus lights illuminating the various heritage buildings. Colourful vignettes can be enjoyed, highlighting traditions of days gone by. Visitors will be able to send a telegram to the North Pole, warm up by the bonfire or try their skills on the ball hockey rink, while children can decorate gingerbread cookies, create a holiday craft and visit with Santa. Registration for this event is required in advance by visiting register.ottawa.ca and entering Vintage Village of Lights in the search bar. Each registration (\$25.50) includes admission to the Vintage Village of Lights for a maximum of six participants.

Firefighter food drive to take place on Dec. 2

ORLÉANS – Ottawa Firefighters will be fanning out across Orléans on Saturday, Dec. 2 to collect food items and cash donations for the Orléans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre food bank. Donations can be made between 11 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at both of the Sobeys stores in Orléans as well as the Metro locations on Tenth Line Road, Innes & Tenth Line, and the Convent Glen Shopping Centre.

Santa Claus is coming to town this weekend

ORLÉANS – Santa's Parade of Lights is taking place this Saturday, Nov. 25 and will follow the traditional route down St. Joseph Blvd. from Youville Drive to Prestone Street. Ottawa Fire Fighters will be on hand along the parade route to collect toys and cash donations for families facing financial hardship in the Ottawa area. Thousands of toys are collected every year which are then distributed to family resources centres in the city including the Orléans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre. As in past years, Santa's Parade of Lights will start at 6 p.m. and will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour to reach the Place d'Orléans Shopping Centre.

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2024 Calendars of Hope available by special order

Continued from page 1

worthy cause the calendars support.

"It's been awesome," says Gina. "People really love my mother's artwork and they look forward now for the new calendar to come out."

Katerina paints various scenes all year long with the idea that some of them will be ultimately used in the calendar.

The two women regularly get together over a coffee or a glass of wine to go through everything and pick a scene to go with each month and season. As an added bonus, people have the opportunity to buy the original artwork of the paintings that appear in the calendar, the cost of which depends on the size of the paintings. A percentage of each painting sold will be added to the funds raised through the sale of the calendars.

During the first year, the calendars mostly sold through word of mouth and social media. Now they sell practically by themselves. Gina has already received orders from people who bought several of



the past editions of the calendar. And they've even come from across North America and even Britain.

They sold close to 500 calendars last year and they've already received orders for 150 calendars this year even though the Ottawa Hospital Foundation has only recently put them on their GiveShop online marketplace page.

The calendars cost \$25 each and can be ordered by e-mailing Gina directly at gmertikas@gmail.com.



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Luloff to carry Conservative banner in next federal election

By Fred Sherwin
The Orléans Star

The federal Conservative Party have put their hopes of winning back the riding of Orléans in the hands of Orléans East-Cumberland city councillor Matt Luloff.

Although no one knows when the next election will be held, the Conservative Party of Canada was eager to get the former Afghanistan War vet on their side in the hope of winning back the seat that hasn't been held by a Tory since 2015.

Royal Galipeau made history in 2006 by becoming only the third Conservative to represent Orléans in over 100 years. The others were Barry Turner from 1984-1988 and Jean Pigott from 1976-1979. He was re-elected to the House of Commons in 2008 and 2011 before he was finally defeated by Liberal Andrew Leslie.

After Leslie retired from politics prior to the 2019 federal election, the seat was retained by Marie-France Lalonde who has held it ever since.

Luloff was first elected to Ottawa city council in 2018 when he beat out 16 other candidates for the seat left vacant by the retirement of Bob Monette. He was re-

elected in 2018, capturing 74 per cent of the vote.

Lalonde was re-elected in 2021 with 52 per cent of the vote compared to 29 per cent garnered by then-Conservative candidate Mary-Elsie Wolfe.

Luloff will be hoping to end the Conservative losing streak in Orléans whenever the next election is held. The Liberal minority government could be brought down anytime by a motion of non-confidence brought forward by the NDP, who form the Official Opposition. It's also possible for the Liberal government to dissolve Parliament and call an election themselves.

Either way, the earliest date for a possible federal election would likely be this spring. If not then, then next fall.

Luloff says the Conservatives are ready to fight an election anytime. But until an election is called, he intends to stick to his duties as a local city councillor, starting with the current budget process.

By provincial statute, city councillors do not have to resign their positions unless they are elected to a higher office either provincially or federally. Which means if Luloff were to lose in the federal election

he would simply resume his duties as city councillor.

Luloff, 39, was born and raised in Orléans and is a graduate of St. Matthew High School.

After graduating from high school in 2002, Luloff joined the Governor-General's Foot Guards and took part in ceremonial events at the Governor-General's residence and on Parliament Hill.

In 2005, he enlisted in the Canadian Army and became a member of the Princess Patricia's Light Infantry. He served in Afghanistan for a six-month tour from February to September 2008.

In 2009, Luloff was diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and given his medical release.

After leaving the army, he completed a degree in public affairs at Carleton University. He also started a podcast in support of other veterans who suffer from PTSD.

In 2015, Luloff began working as an issues manager for Liberal Minister of National Defence Harjit Sajjan.

Since first getting elected to Ottawa city council in 2018, Luloff has served in a number of roles including chair of the



Matt Luloff

Ottawa Public Library Board and Council Liaison for Veteran and Military Issues.

Away from politics, Luloff is the lead guitarist and frontman for the band, Hearts and Mines. He is fluently bilingual and he and his wife Laura have two young daughters.

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The race is on

News that local city councillor Matt Luloff has decided to take a run at the local seat in the House of Commons and that he is doing so as a Conservative has hit like a bombshell in Orléans.

Many Liberals are calling him a turncoat, while most Conservatives are thrilled at the fact that Luloff, who is an Afghan war veteran and a life-long resident of the community, gives them their best shot at winning the riding since Royal Galipeau held the seat from 2006 to 2015. That said, he has his work cut out for him.

Orléans has only had three Conservative MPs representing them since confederation – the late Jean Pigott from 1976 to 1979, Barry Turner from 1984 to 1988 and Galipeau.

The first two can be considered anomalies in the current context because Orléans was part of the riding of Ottawa-Carleton at the time, which included the mostly rural and mostly Conservative township of Cumberland, and Galipeau was a unicorn. Before he ran for the Conservative nomination in 2005, he was a staunch Liberal supporter who had worked for former Liberal MPs Mauril Bélanger and Eugène Bellemare.

Dissatisfied with the direction the Chrétien government had taken, he decided to switch sides and only won the seat thanks to a strong showing by the NDP candidate who took enough votes from Liberal incumbent Marc Godbout to allow Galipeau to win by less than 2,000 votes.

So as you can see, history is not on Luloff's side. To stand any chance against the Liberal incumbent, he has to capitalize on his own popularity as the local city councillor for Orléans West-Cumberland, build a strong team around him with lots of volunteer foot soldiers and hope that he can win a majority of the military vote in Orléans.

The fluently bilingual Luloff must also hold his own among franco-phone voters in Orléans who traditionally vote in stronger numbers as a percentage of their demographic than English voters. And he must rely on a strong federal campaign which in itself is hoping that the current anti-Trudeau sentiment in the nation will linger until Canadians go to the polls, likely in 2025. Finally, his chances would also improve if the NDP and Green Party both have strong candidates which traditionally have pulled votes away from the Liberal candidate.

So as you can see, a lot of things must go right in order for Luloff to have any chance of unseating the current Liberal incumbent.

For her part, Marie-France Lalonde must rely on the strong Liberal machine which exists in Orléans and hope that she is more popular than the Prime Minister.

It should be an interesting contest.

– Fred Sherwin, editor

THE
Orléans Star



Fredrick C. Sherwin, Editor & Publisher
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IT'S BEEN A ROUGH YEAR



Province/feds should remove HST on home heating oil

For many Orléans families it has been a very difficult few months. The affordability crisis of higher rents and mortgage payments, higher utility costs and higher grocery prices, is placing significant financial burden on individuals and families in our community.

Interest rates continue to rise all while households are facing higher levels of debt.

These factors, combined with the rising costs of living, are challenging the economic well-being and quality of life for Orléans families. A quality of life families have worked so hard to achieve.

For months I have been calling on the Ford Government to provide relief for Ontario families. Not simply to pass the buck to others, but to use the tools Ontario has at its disposal to provide direct relief.

Last week, in an effort to alleviate some financial pressure on families, I introduced a Motion in the legislature calling on the Ford Government, to work to remove the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) on fuels and inputs for home heating for Ontario's families.

By taking that HST off home heating, families will receive a direct financial benefit every time they pay their bills. This is a simple and sensible measure that would make life more affordable and fairer for Ontarians.

I ask the Premier if he would support my motion, and in response the government chose to play procedural games. Keeping the Legislature in session until midnight, adjourning debates only

to return to them

I have also written to the federal finance minister and deputy prime minister, Chrystia Freeland. I have asked that the federal government to work with Ontario to eliminate the HST from home heating.

In Ontario, we don't have a choice but to heat our homes in winter. We shouldn't be paying a value added tax on a necessity like home heating.

The Ford Government has had many opportunities to act to save Ontario families money, instead, they ask other levels of government to act.

Ontarians are tired of the Ford Government passing the buck, and it's time to start putting some bucks back in their pockets.



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Stephen Blais

www.orleansstar.ca

Independent community papers still alive and well

It was Mark Twain who once wrote, “The reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated,” or something to that effect in responding to an obituary that had been written about him. While speaking on behalf of the other 128 community newspaper owners in Ontario – reports of our death have been greatly exaggerated as well.

There’s barely a week that goes by when I don’t receive condolences over the demise of a particular newspaper, or newspapers in general. And despite the recent closure of 71 community newspapers in Ontario by the Metroland Media Group, there are still 128 operating across the province, most of which, like the *Orléans Star* and the *L’Orléanais*, are independently owned. And that’s the key.

News report after news report about the closing of the Metroland newspapers blamed it on the “changing reading habits” of their audience, or at least that was the excuse given by the Metroland spin doctors.

By “changing reading habits” they meant that most of their former readers had turned to the Internet to get their news. And while it is true that most people get their news from various Internet platforms ranging from digital news sites to social media, most of it is either national or international



news, or professional sports. The truth of the matter is that most of the news you find in a community newspaper can only be found in that particular community newspaper.

The real reason Metroland closed its newspapers is a lack of respect for their readers and a focus on the bottom line at the expense of content. When accountants start running a newspaper, you can bet the end is near.

The Metroland papers were being run by accountants and the results was all too predictable. As the price for printing and distribution went up, they began to cut the only other discretionary costs they had left – reporters and freelancers. Stories that were being reported on locally, were being replaced by generic articles produced in a central clearing house. At the same time, the percentage of the paper devoted to editorial

content steadily shrank and the advertising portion steadily grew to 60 per cent or more.

I’ve been in this business almost 35 years and there’s one thing that has never changed – if your newspaper doesn’t have relevant, thought-provoking content about the community it serves, no one will read it.

When I bought the *Orléans Star* in 2016, it had no editorial, no opinion pieces of any kind and was running at about 60 per cent advertising. All that changed after I took over and we now run the paper with a 50/50 split between editorial content and advertising.

That doesn’t mean that community newspapers don’t have issues. I recently attended the Ontario Independent Newspaper Publishers Conference near Orangeville where the two main topics of conversation was the Metroland closures and the continued strength of the independents.

Independent community newspapers will continue to survive for two main reasons – we produce local stories about local news and events for local readers, and we provide an affordable advertising option for local businesses which can’t afford radio and TV ads, or expensive brochure campaigns.

That doesn’t mean that we aren’t facing our fair share of challenges. Most notably,

the trend by various levels of government to advertise on social media platforms at the expense of main stream media outlets including community newspapers like this one. For example, the federal government spent nearly \$200 million in advertising in 2022, 80 per cent of which went to Google, Twitter and Facebook. Which means those tax dollars went straight to the tech giants in California at the expense of local media. Only four per cent went to community newspapers. That hurts.

Here in Ottawa, the city no longer runs rezoning notices, or notices about various public meetings or consultations in the paper. It sends all its money to California as well.

In order to make up for the loss in revenue, and increased costs, community newspapers have to be innovative. Here at the *Orléans Star* it means running different special sections, publishing our annual *Christmas Recipe and Songbook* and producing a physical road map of Orléans.

We are also developing a program by which our readers will be able to provide a modest monthly contribution in exchange for some bonuses. Stay tuned for that and in the meantime, the *Orléans Star* will continue to serve our readers and the community.



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Orléans is blessed with an abundance of outstanding youth

For over 15 years, this paper and its editor, Fred Sherwin, have been highlighting incredible youth achievement in the arts, academics, sports and community service.

Celebrating young leadership in our community is so important, as it encourages and recognizes personal growth and achievement in a public and supportive way.

This is an incredibly bright generation, more globally aware and interconnected than any that has come before. This includes my own generation, rocked in the early 1990s by the advent of the Internet.

In my sojourns to elementary and high school classes to talk about civics, I am always impressed by the thoughtful, well-informed questions and discussion.

These youth are bright, and every mind deserves a break every once in a while.

I have been particularly impressed with a few projects I have had the honour of visiting in recent years.

The students at Carine Wilson Secondary School set up a mock UN refugee camp to illustrate both the difficult conditions and the

services offered to those displaced by war – it was moving.

At École élémentaire catholique Jeanne Sauvé, the students competed for funding for a project to improve their school – now, classrooms feature beautiful plants providing a calm atmosphere (supported by École secondaire Gisèle Lalonde).

St. Peter High School has several very active student groups and find ways to celebrate and support each other – they also run a very successful food drive every year – and the students at Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School do an excellent job with their Toy Mountain.

This is merely a snapshot of what our bright, young people are doing together.

The *Orléans Star's* Outstanding Youth Awards over 20 amazing youth in our community every year. As one of the judges, I have the privilege of reading about their amazing accomplishments and picking the recipient is never an easy task. Each nominee is deserving in their own right to be recognized as “outstanding”.

I salute them all.



Matt Luloff

Orléans East-Cumberland

'Tis the season to learn about the city's winter operations

I can't believe winter is already here! As the city gears up for yet another season, ensuring the safety and accessibility of our roads, sidewalks, and pathways for all is a top priority.

The winter maintenance program continues to evolve, update its standards, and find improvements. This year's changes include around-the-clock maintenance of sidewalk/cycle networks, rotation of starting points on residential beats, and embracing a data-driven approach to winter weather events by deploying more efficiently.

It's also important to stay informed and be in the know of road conditions and winter parking bans. When a parking ban is called, parking your car on city streets is prohibited unless you have a residential parking permit.

Parking bans are called to support winter operations and the decision to call one isn't taken lightly. When there are no vehicles on the road, operators can more effectively clear the roads and catch basins of ice and snow. You

can register to receive e-notifications whenever a winter weather parking ban is announced. Visit ottawa.ca to sign up.

Reminder that crews strive to achieve an initial cleanup of residential roads within 10-16 hours from the end of a significant snow event (7 cm or more). If you have a winter maintenance related request that exceeds that time frame, your best bet is to first call 3-1-1. My office is also more than happy to help should complications arise.

On a more festive note, as the holidays approach, let's come together to make a positive impact in our communities. Whether it's donating to the food bank or resource centre, volunteering your time, or supporting a charitable cause, every act of kindness counts.

I also hope to see you at the annual Santa's Parade of Lights in Orléans on Saturday, Nov. 25 at 6 pm along St. Joseph Blvd.! Here's to a safe and happy holiday season.



Catherine Kitts

Orléans South-Navan

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Accident(s) lead local designer to create pre-planning journal

STAR STAFF – Jody Maffett understands life can change in a heartbeat. Losing her mother at a young age, the Orléans resident and her siblings were raised by a single father.

“Because it was just him, Dad regularly told us – rather ominously – ‘this is what you do if I drop dead,’” says Jody.

Influenced by her father, Jody made her first will at 24. She regularly updates it and encourages others to do the same.

“Get that done. Wills, Power of Attorney (POA) declarations and Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) instructions are essential,” she says.

Tragically, Jody’s father suffered a traumatic brain injury in 2017. During his recovery, Jody and her siblings faced the daunting task of going through all of his papers and financial documents.

“Helping him get better was our main goal, but we had to sort out everything else, too. I’m not going to lie – it was hard,” recalls Jody.

As careful as they were, no one noticed a recurring payment for a service that was no longer used. When they finally caught it, it was thousands of dollars too late.

It took more jolts for Jody, a self-employed graphic designer, to fully recognize the volume of information needed by others when tragedy happens, whether

it’s becoming incapacitated or worse.

While in the hospital recovering from an emergency appendectomy, she realized she was the only one who knew how to make her business HST payment (due that day) or how to contact her clients.

“I was in my hospital bed texting clients that I would be a bit late meeting their deadlines. When I looked at them later, well, they were mostly incoherent – but I have great clients who totally understood. That said, I wish someone else could have sent those notes.”

The final tipping point was hitting her head hard this summer at the family cottage in Lanark. Afterwards, she thought, “What if I have a brain injury like Dad? No one will know where my stuff is or what to do. What about Jenny (her beloved dog)?” She also had work deadlines – and her HST was due.

The thought of saddling her sister and kids with figuring out the nitty-gritty details of her life led Jody to create a journal where vital information is noted in one place for easy reference. *It’s been nice, but now I’m dead (or perhaps just really, really sick)* reflects Jody’s wry sense of humour while addressing a serious subject.

While it’s not an entirely new idea, Jody has ramped it up, filled it with Canadian content and has both interactive PDFs and

print versions available – the French versions will be available in early December.

Among those “nitty-gritty details” in her own journal are her dog’s favourite treats, a request to make sure any chin hair is taken care of if she’s in a coma – “Women over 50 can relate,” laughs Jody – a list of clients to contact, which community mailbox is hers, the passcode to her garage door and instructions that her daughter gets all of her Starbucks points.

“I try to live by the motto ‘Don’t sweat the small stuff’, but these days, there is just so much small stuff. My journal covers the minutia in our lives. We’re complicated people – multiple email addresses, online subscriptions, social media accounts, our pets’ vets...there’s just so much,” Jody stresses.

The first print run of the journal sold out within weeks.

“People have told me they’re having ‘Journal Parties’. They’re making a night of it and helping each other fill out their journals,” says Jody who sells the journals for \$22 (PDF) and \$32 (hard copy). Both prices include HST...which will be paid on time, even if something happens to her.

To order, please visit www.maffett.ca and click on the book button. It’s also available on Amazon – just look for her



Jody Maffett

name. “A lot of people are ordering them for Christmas presents. I always suggest adding a note that says, ‘I hope nothing happens to you, but fill this out just in case’.”

As for Jody’s 88-year-old father – who now lives with her – he’s still alive and kicking, much to his own surprise.



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Community resource centre launches Christmas program

STAR STAFF – The Orléans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre (OCCRC) needs your help. As in years past, the OCCRC plans to provide seasonal food items and gifts for area families experiencing financial hardship during this holiday season.

More than 950 individuals benefited from the program last year, which included 267 families and 470 children.

But demand is expected to be even higher this holiday season. Over the past two years, the OCCRC food bank has seen a 58 per cent increase in demand.

While several factors have contributed to the increase in demand for services, much of it is due to the impact inflation has had on the cost of living, especially the cost of groceries.

According to OCCRC executive director Luc Ouellette, inflation has deepened the challenge for many local families to make it through the holiday season. The Christmas program, along with seasonal items collected and distributed by the OCCRC food bank, helps ease the stress and anxiety faced by many parents during



2023 Christmas Program

Scan the QR code for details!



these challenging times.

“It is difficult for many of these families and parents,” says Ouellette. “But thanks to the generosity of those people who are able to donate to the Christmas program, we can help them provide a gift for their kids.”

Donations are being accepted in \$50 increments, with each family getting a \$50 gift card per child from either Giant Tiger, Walmart or Amazon.

Individuals and organizations can also sponsor a family or donate by visiting croc.ca, clicking on the 2023 Christmas Program banner, or scanning the QR code. The link will take you to a page where you can download a fillable registration form or make a direct donation. Funds are also being collected by the food bank to help stock the shelves for the busy holiday season.

As of the publication date of this news-

paper the program is already at full capacity. Parents who are still in need of assistance will be offered other means of support.

This year, with the assistance of area donors, the OCCRC can help make the holidays a little easier for those in our community who need it most.

With your help, they can ensure that every child in our community has food and a gift this holiday season.

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Cumberland studio offers unique one-of-a-kind gift items

Special to the Orléans Star

Who knew there were so many talented artists in our area? Looking for a unique item for that special someone who made the top of your Christmas list? There is a store just 10 minutes from Orléans that offers one-of-a-kind gift items made by local artists and artisans in nearly every price range. Da Artisti Studio and Gallery is located just east of Orléans in the heart of Cumberland Village.

The studio specializes in fused glasswork made by Wendy Canci, Martine Marceau and Jennifer Kelly. From gorgeous wall hangings and sculptures to decorative bowls and vases, to sushi sets and more: no two pieces are alike.

The coloured glass comes to life as the light is reflected off each glass element. You won't find anything like it in Orléans. The same can be said for the stained-glass creations made by the talented Diana Atkinson, whose pieces hang in the gallery's windows.

The shelves are overflowing with unique artwork: jewelry, ceramics, woodwork, soaps, candles, scarves, and so much more. The walls of the gallery are adorned by exquisite paintings and woodwork. A new addition to the gallery is Lise Forgues' book art pieces. Talk about patience. Each piece takes over 100 hours to achieve.

Every holiday season Da Artisti stages an exhibition of small and affordable works by local artists. This year, you can treat yourself or a loved one to the works of Danielle Beaulieu (watercolour), Brian Phillips (marquetry), Joanne Lacroix (pyrography) and Mary Douglas (acrylic and oil). The exhibit is on until Dec. 31.

Among the local artists featured at Da Artisti is Deborah Lyall who is famous for her fibre and textile art. Deborah will be at the studio for the Cumberland Christmas Market on Dec. 2, where she will be presenting several new creations including handbags, pocketbooks, clothing and small original art pieces as well as hand-stitched Christmas ornaments. She will be joined at the studio by Nathalie Brunelle, jeweler and greeting card maker extraordinaire, as well as Raymond Simonot (wood-turning art).

To make Dec. 2 all the more special, harp maestro Ian Hepburn will be playing live between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Amazing!!! The gallery will also be selling wood Christmas Trees by Nick and Giani Canci which are sure to jazz up your porch.

When you visit Da Artisti you will also find exceptional woodwork creations by Ron Lacroix and Serge and Sheila Parisien, metal sculptures by Ron Matton and ceramics by Katherine Arnold.



The Da Artisti Studio and Gallery in Cumberland Village is full of one-of-kind, unique gift ideas created by local artists and artisans. STAFF PHOTO

The cabinets are filled with handmade jewelry by Nathalie Brunelle and hand-blown glass creations by Barbara Ham and Janet Evans. You will be surprised by how affordable they are! The gallery also carries exquisite woven scarves by Ian Hepburn.

Don't be surprised by all the talent which surrounds us. The quality of the artwork cannot be overstated. You would have to travel to the Byward Market or Merrickville to see the same type of craftsmanship you will find at the Da Artisti Studio and Gallery. In

fact, almost everything at Da Artisti can fit into any Christmas shopping budget or you can simply purchase a Da Artisti gift certificate which can be redeemed for merchandise or fused glass classes at a later date.

Da Artisti is open Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. They studio and gallery are closed Mondays and Tuesdays. You can visit their website at daartisti.ca on their Facebook page at facebook.com/DaArtisti.

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Da Artisti

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Shenkman Arts Centre is full of gifts this season

STAR STAFF – There's a lot happening at the Shenkman Arts Centre for the rest of 2023 and into 2024. Whether you are looking for a show to enjoy yourself or a gift for someone special in your life, there is something for everyone!

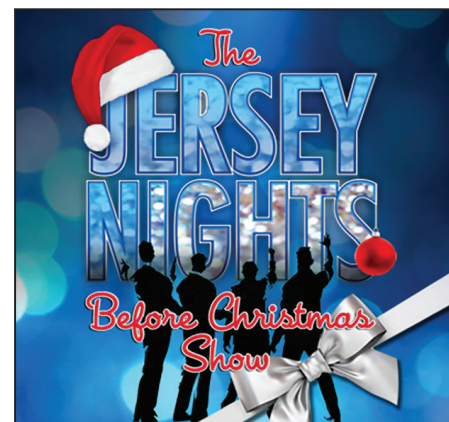
The holiday season kicks off with the Orléans Holiday Arts Market.

Taking place on Dec. 2 and Dec. 3, the market will offer up unique gift ideas brought to you by creative, local vendors. The market is open on Saturday, Dec. 2 from 12 noon to 8:30 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 3 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free.

Also on Dec. 2, award-winning Elvis tribute artist Pete Paquette returns to the Shenkman Arts Centre to present his annual Christmas special. Tickets are \$64 and can be purchased online at shenkmanarts.ca.

A special Christmas concert is being held in the Richcraft Theatre on Thursday, Dec. 21 featuring the John Dapaah Jazz Trio, Michael Curtis Hanna and Roxanne Goodman.

If jazz isn't your cup of eggnog, the Jersey Nights Before Christmas Show is being presented the same night in the



Harold Shenkman Hall with two shows at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are \$62.50.

Finally, 2023 will be brought to a close with the 12th Annual New Year's Eve Comedy Night on Sunday, Dec. 31 featuring Jenn Labelle, Rob Pue and Leonard Chan. These hilarious headliners are sure to have you entering the New Year with a smile.

For a complete schedule of all the shows this holiday season and into 2024 visit shenkmanarts.ca. You can buy a ticket for yourself, or purchase a gift card for that special someone on your list.

Holiday Events

December 2-3
Orléans Holiday Arts Market

December 21
Christmas at Shenkman

December 31
12th Annual New Years
Eve Comedy Night

shenkmanarts.ca

Season **23**
24

When it comes to maintaining your furnace, experience matters

STAR STAFF – There's no question that when it comes to maintaining your furnace, experience matters. It can also save you hundreds of dollars.

By hiring a professional to regularly maintain your furnace and humidifier, both units will be able to operate at maximum efficiency, and you will be able to avoid any problems that often occur when a home's furnace is neglected.

"It's the one appliance you can't do without," says Jerry Lemay, who has been installing and maintaining furnaces in the east end for over 47 years.

Now is the time to have your furnace checked out to prevent any potential problems from popping up this winter.

Anyone who has experienced having their furnace malfunction in the dead of winter due to improper maintenance, or no maintenance at all, very seldom makes the same mistake twice. With his wealth of experience, Jerry can pinpoint problems repairmen with far less experience may not which could mean the difference between merely repairing your furnace or having to replace it entirely.

Although he is a sales rep for the Keeprite line of furnaces, Jerry can repair any make

and model including gas furnaces, oil furnaces and electric furnaces, which is why he's earned the nickname "Dr. Furnace".

"I've gained a reputation for being the repairman of last resort," Jerry explains "A lot of people call me for a second opinion, or when they can't seem to get the right answer from anyone else. Obviously, I would prefer if they called me first. It would save them a lot of headaches."

It's important to note that contracting J.G. Lemay Heating and Air Conditioning to maintain your furnace will not effect your existing warranty.

Besides furnaces, Lemay also repairs and maintains hot water tanks, humidifiers, thermostats, and heat recovery ventilation systems, not to mention gas BBQ hook-ups, kitchen fan installation and dryer hook-ups and installation.

Jerry warns against signing contracts offered by door-to-door salesmen who are often nothing more than con artists.

"No reputable furnace salesperson or maintenance guy is going to walk around with a clipboard. Stay away from those guys," says Lemay.

For quality work you can trust, it's best to go



J.G. LEMAY
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

FRED SHERWIN PHOTO

Jerry Lemay has been in the home heating and air conditioning business for more than 47 years. FRED SHERWIN PHOTO

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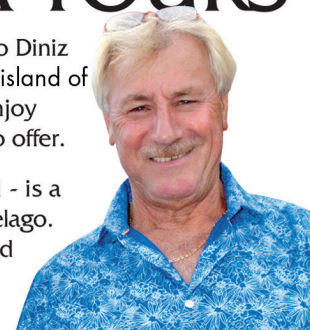
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Béatrice-Desloges successfully defend ‘AA’ hoops title

By Fred Sherwin
The Orléans Star

The Béatrice-Desloges Bulldogs senior girls basketball team successfully defended the National Capital AA championship on Monday with a 36-29 win over the Samuel Genest Lazers.

The final was a tight defensive affair until the fourth quarter when the Bulldogs superior free throw shooting allowed them to pull ahead of the Lazers and ultimately win the game.

Samuel Genest proved to be their own worst enemies in the first quarter, making just three of 17 shots from the floor, or 18 per cent.

Beatrice-Desloges wasn’t much better, making just one basket on 11 attempts. After sinking their first shot of the game for a three-point basket they missed their next 10 in a row.

The difference in the first quarter was the Bulldogs’ free throw shooting. They went to the free throw line six times and made four shots.

The score at the end of the first quarter was 7-6 in favour of the Bulldogs.

The shooting in the second quarter was much better with Samuel Genest making five

of 12 shots. The Bulldogs were good on three of 10 shots from the floor and they made the two free throws they had to keep the score close. By the time the first half ended their one point lead was turned into a four-point deficit.

The Lazers shooting woes returned in the third quarter where they missed 17 shots in a row, including two free throws, before finally making a basket. The Bulldogs, meanwhile, got a basket from Alexia Schryburt and a free throw basket from Elodie Bard to narrow deficit to a single point.

After Samuel Genest first basket of the second half allowed them to regain a three pint advantage, Schyrburt made a pair of free throws to cut it back to a single point and Bard’s basket ear the end of the third quarter would give the Bulldogs their first lead since the halftime break.

In the fourth and final quarter both teams managed to step up their game, scoring 22 points between them, but it was the Bulldogs who made the most of their opportunities, sinking 50 per cent of their shots from the floor for 14 points. The Lazers, meanwhile, shot just 33 per cent for eight points.

When the final buzzer sounded the Bulldogs were on top 36-29.



The Béatrice-Desloges Bulldogs are the NCSSAA senior girls ‘AA’ champions for 2023. FRED SHERWIN PHOTO

Schryburt led the way for the Bulldogs with 13 points, two rebounds and three steals. Five of her 13 points came from the free throw line where she went 5-for-6.

Bard ended the game with eight points and her sister Cléa Bard scored nine points, including a three-point basket in the fourth

quarter. The Bulldogs must now prepare for the OFSAA ‘AA’ tournament which starts on Nov. 23 in Guelph. In last year’s tournament, they won their first three games before losing in the playoffs. This year they hope to go all the way to the gold medal game.



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Cuba resort ready for another sun-drenched season

By Fred Sherwin
The Orléans Star

Regular readers of this paper already know that I have an affinity for the Caribbean island of Cuba and it's people. And my resort of choice when I visit Cuba is the Starfish Santa Maria located on Cayo Santa Maria on the north side of the island.

I first stayed at the Starfish in 2017 and have been back to the all-inclusive resort a half dozen times since, including twice in the past year since they re-opened post-pandemic.

Having been to Cuba since the country reopened, I have experienced first hand some of the challenges the country has faced. If you think the rest of the world has experienced supply chain issues, they pale in comparison to what Cuba has had to go through when you pile supply chain issues on top of the decades-old economic embargo imposed on the country by the United States for the past 60 years.

The supply chain issues meant that most of the resorts in Cuba had difficulty providing the same level of quality in terms of their menu items that they did prior to the pandemic. In a perfect world, they would have waited to the supply chain issues to rectify themselves before opening. But the world is far from perfect, especially in the hospitality industry and especially in a country with the challenges Cuba has been faced with. Cuba had no choice but to reopen when they did last November even with the very serious supply chain issues they faced.

Other countries like Mexico, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic had already reopened to tourism for at least six months. Cuba couldn't afford to wait much longer and risk losing an even greater percentage of foreign tourism to the other popular southern destinations.

But that was then and this is now. Over the past year, access to food has improved

greatly at most of the Cuban resorts and their menus both at their buffets and in their à la carte restaurants are much more varied than they were a year ago, including at the Starfish Santa Maria which has only recently been designated as an "adults only" resort by its parent company Blue Diamond which is based in Toronto.

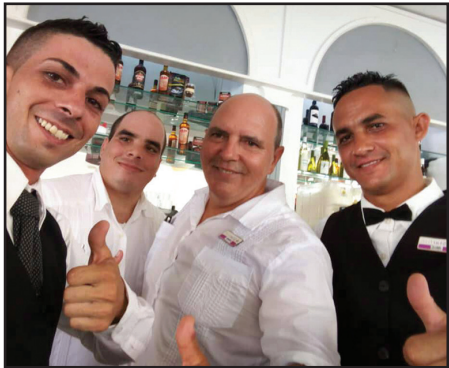
Now I know everyone has their favourite resort. My dad, for instance, swore by the Riu resort in Montego Bay, Jamaica. He wouldn't go to any other resort. My favourite resort, in case you haven't surmised by now, is the Starfish Santa Maria. And that's for several reasons. The beach on Cayo Santa Maria has been voted one of the best in the world. It has no seaweed, no rocks, no jelly fish and no current. The sand is limestone, so it never gets hot under foot, and it's always pristine.

The pool at the Starfish is also top notch. But it's the staff that truly keep me coming back time and again. The staff from the senior management to the chambermaids and even the gardeners are unbelievably friendly and go out of their way to make you feel like you are part of the family.

The Starfish is also one of the most affordable resorts in Cuba. A one-week stay in early December can be purchased for less than \$800, depending on which day you want to leave and that's including airfare.

In January, which is high season, the price can go up to \$1,100. Now keep in mind that the Starfish Santa Maria is listed as a three and a half star resort, which is the main reason the price is so affordable. But really the only difference between the Starfish and four or four and a half star resort is the food. But then again, I don't go there for the food. In fact, food is the least important item on my list of reasons to go to a resort.

The top most items on my list are location, beach, service and the swimming pool. When I go to Cuba, I go there to relax. I'm



Fred Sherwin Photos

not looking to go clubbing at night or take in an exotic night show, although the Starfish does have nightly entertainment. I'm going to chill and recharge my batteries on one of the nicest beaches in the world.

The only issue I have with Santa Maria is the fact that it takes a two-hour bus ride to get there from the airport at Santa Clara. At least it's an issue until I actually arrive and then it's definitely worth it.

I'm actually planning to go back in a couple of weeks and I can hardly wait to see Yurien, Kenny, Heriberto, Dennis, Carlito, Freddie, Javier, Mildrey, Anai, Daikel and the rest of the gang. But first I must go to Havana for a

day or two to visit some friends and stop by Trinidad to see my buddy Camilo.

I'm really excited about visiting Havana for the first time since before the pandemic. The city has a number of great restaurants and the air is filled with music 24/7. It also has the Fábrica de Arte, which is one the greatest night life venues in the western hemisphere with three floors, each offering a different type of music, three art installations and great food.

I'll be sure to write all about it when I get back.



Former St. Pete's runner wins USport cross country title

STAR STAFF – Former St. Peter High School runner Katie Newlove recently won the women's cross country crown at the Canadian university cross country championships in Guelph, known more commonly as the USport championships.

Newlove, who is in her third year at the University of British Columbia, lived up to her pre-meet ranking as the top female university cross country athlete in the country, winning the eight kilometre long race by 12 seconds over Catherine Beauchemin from the University of Laval.

The win capped an remarkable season for Newlove, who went into the final race of the season having won the Canada West cross country championships and placed third at the British Columbia provincial championships in October.

Her win is a huge improvement over last year's national championships when she placed 32nd at the event in Halifax.

Newlove's win at the this year's national championships also helped propel UBC to the women's team title.

While a Grade 12 senior at St. Peter High School in 2019, Newlove finished 15th at



FILE PHOTO

Former St. Peter High School student Katie Newlove recently won the USport women's cross country title.

the provincial high school cross country championships. That same year she came in second at the National Capital high school track and field championships in the 3,000 metres and 12th at provincials.

Boas festas!

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SATURDAY, NOV. 25

SANTA'S PARADE OF LIGHTS beginning at 6 p.m. at the corner of St. Joseph Blvd. and Youville Dr. The parade will follow its traditional route down St. Joseph Blvd. to the Orléans Town Centre.

FRIDAY, NOV. 24

SATURDAY, NOV. 25

SUNDAY, NOV. 26

THE OTTAWA SCHOOL OF THEATRE presents "The Velveteen Rabbit" at the Shenkman Arts Centre. Showtimes: Friday at 6:30 p.m., Saturday at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. and Sunday at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$10 for individuals 25 and under. Family package (2 adults and children) \$50. Tickets can be purchased at www.ost-eto.ca.

SUNDAY, NOV. 26

4TH ANNUAL CHILI CHALLENGE from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Stray Dog Brewing Company, 501 Lacolle Way in the Taylor Creek Business Park. Come taste the results when local restaurants go head-to-head to see who can make the best chili in Orléans.

FRIDAY, DEC. 1

THE CUMBERLAND COMMUNITY SINGERS present "Peace & Joy" from 7:30 p.m. at Orleans United Church, 1111 Orléans Blvd.. Come and join us for an uplifting evening filled with songs of peace and joy. This concert will feature new interpretations of traditional hymns and some newer less well known pieces that celebrate the beauty of Christmas. Bring the

whole family - kids are free! Tickets available at <https://bit.ly/CCSPeaceandJoy>.

SATURDAY, DEC. 9

THE 30TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS ANGELS FUNDRAISER to raise money for deserving local families at Christmastime. Event gets underway at 7 p.m. at Taproom260 in the Orléans Town Centre on Centrum Boulevard. Live music, silent auction and raffle prizes. Raffle tickets can be purchased in advance beginning Dec. 1 at the restaurant or at taproom260.com/christmas.

IN MEMORIAM



Suzanne Dubien, 81
Passed away on November 12, 2023

Jean-Yves Bélec, 68
Passed away on November 10, 2023

Pierre Perrier, 69
Passed away on November 9, 2023



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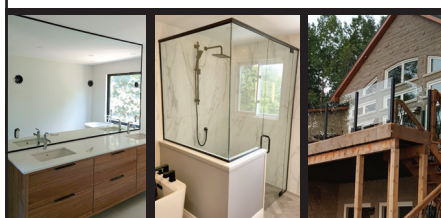
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