

Merry Christmas!

from

Kyle Seeback, M.P. Dufferin-Caledon



A Message from Kyle:

'Tis the season
Dufferin-Caledon!

The Christmas season has arrived
Dufferin-Caledon!

It's my favourite time of the year because of the joy and positivity Christmas brings. It also brings a renewed sense of peace and hope, as we see the community come together to support one another. Much of that is due to the exceptional community groups and charities we have right here in Dufferin-Caledon. They dedicate themselves to ensuring critically important programs and services are delivered, not just during the Christmas season, but throughout the entire year.

If you have the means, I encourage you to support any of our local community groups or charities in Dufferin-Caledon to help them spread the magic of the season.

I also wish you and your loved ones
a very Merry Christmas and a
Happy and healthy 2024!

Sincerely,
Kyle Seeback, M.P.
Dufferin-Caledon

Kyle Seeback, M.P. Dufferin-Caledon
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SOME OF THE AMAZING CHARITIES & COMMUNITY GROUPS IN DUFFERIN-CALEDON

Below I've listed a few of the outstanding local charities and community groups serving Dufferin-Caledon. If you're able to make a small contribution to any of them or any local charity during the Christmas season, it can have a huge impact on those they support.

Caledon Community Services & The Exchange
Salvation Army New Hope Community Church

Shepherd's Cupboard Food Bank

Orangeville Food Bank

Family Transition Place

Caledon Animal Shelter



Headwaters Health Care Foundation

Hospice Dufferin

Bethell Hospice

Caledon Meals on Wheels

Choices Youth Shelter

Community Living Dufferin



Ontario SPCA Orangeville & District Animal Centre



Christmas in the Park



Be sure to check out Christmas in the Park with your loved ones during the holidays. The Orangeville Optimist Club has been bringing this free event to our community for over 30 years. You don't want to miss the spectacular lights, illuminated characters, and music. It's a fun event for the whole family to enjoy, running now until December 31st. For more details, please see below:

December 1 – 31, 2023

5:30 pm - 10:00 pm

(Free Admission)

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BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO
HELPING HAND FOR THE HOLIDAYS: The Shelburne Wolves U13 Rep team decided to give back to the community this holiday season, raising \$900 through its own donations and ones collected by Main Street Family Dental and Giant Tiger. The kids brought a huge assortment of food, toys, and clothes to the Shepherd's Cupboard Food Bank in Shelburne on Tuesday, Dec. 12. Turn to Page 15 for the full story.

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Dufferin County raises taxes by 4 per cent

Written By Paula Brown
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Dufferin County Council have wrapped up their duties for the year after approving the budget for 2024.

During their meeting last Thursday (Dec. 14), Dufferin County Council approved the 2024 budget with a tax levy increase of 4 per cent, or \$15.36 per \$100,000 of assessment based on MPAC'S property assessment, on the County's portion of resident's tax bill.

"Dufferin County's 2024 Budget will support our growing community with investments in climate action and digital modernization, upgrades and maintenance on important capital infrastructure, and a focus on using our Climate and Equity Lenses to ensure we are making decision with social and environmental considerations in alignment with our long-term objectives," said Dufferin County Warden Darren White. "The Budget was developed with a focus on moving our ambitious Strategic Plan forward, and will allow us to continue to build a community that grows together."

Aimee Raves, manager of corporate

finance and treasurer of Dufferin County, presented a recap of the 2024 draft budget to councillors, which initially recommended a tax levy increase of 7.45 per cent or \$49,018,000 in tax dollars.

The tax levy is the amount of money required to be raised from property taxes to fund the business of the County after applying all other sources of revenue, including internal transfers from reserves.

According to the initially proposed budget, for the County to continue with its current services, also known as the status quo, the tax levy increase would be 7.36 per cent plus 1.81 per cent for additional costs for staffing, paramedic enhancement and the physician recruitment program.

Factoring in the assessment growth rate, which is at 1.72 per cent, would bring the status quo down to 7.45 per cent.

During their Nov. 23 meeting, councillors raised concerns with the recommended tax levy increase and had indicated five specific revisions to the budget that would reduce the budget by about \$1.5 million and lead to a tax levy increase of 4 per cent.

A one per cent reduction in the tax levy is equivalent to \$448,996, so in order for County Council to lower the tax levy to

four per cent, they needed to reduce the budget by \$1.5 million.

Through deliberations of committee budgets, County Council was able to agreed on four of the five suggested revisions, which decreased the tax levy increase by 3.45 per cent bringing the tax levy to 4 per cent with the growth rate factored in.

The total tax levy increase for the 2024 budget to support the delivery of service is \$47, 469,913 or 4 per cent. The levy includes a \$7,513,497 capital investment towards the purchase or replacement of assets, which will prepare for future contingencies and operating, capital and special initiatives.

Raves noted that the 4 per cent tax levy increase is low compared to other municipalities in the area that have yet to pass their budgets.

"I know a lot of the counties they're the same as we are; they started about 10 per cent and trying to figure out how to bring it down," said Raves.

The full Dufferin County budget for 2024 including division overviews and highlights are available for public viewing on the County of Dufferin website at www.dufferincounty.ca

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Melancthon mayor elected as 147th Warden of Dufferin County

Written By **Paula Brown**
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Dufferin County Council will be guided by knowing hands for the upcoming year with former Warden Darren White elected to lead council for 2024.

White was elected to the position, which he will hold for the 2024 term, during a County Council meeting last Thursday (Dec. 15). He is taking over the role from Shelburne Mayor Wade Mills, who chose to step back from the role after holding the position for the last two years.

Prior to the election for the 2024 Warden, Mills provided a reflection on his time as Warden of Dufferin County.

"I've tried to approach this role over the past two years from a place of humility, not to impose my own personal agenda, but rather to help steer the ship, to build consensus where possible and to help move our collectively conceived visions forward," said Mills. "I view these roles that we hold very much as a team effort and I think that our community is best served when we're able to work productively together."

Coun. Janet Horner, the Mayor of Mulmur, and White were both nominated for the position as the head of county council, with White officially being elected following a 10-5 vote.

The Warden is the head of Dufferin County

Council and acts as the chief executive officer (CEO) for the County, leading council meetings, and providing representation at functions.

Concluding his election as the 147th Warden of Dufferin County, White was handed the floor to read the oath of office.

"It's certainly an honour to be nominated to fill this very important role," said White.

Speaking with the Free Press, White said one of the biggest areas of focus for the council will be addressing the demands of inflation.

"We have to find new innovative ways to deal with this. We can't sit back and wait for other people to help us because clearly, they're not coming. So, we have to do it ourselves. We have to look at best practices of other municipalities and other areas to find ways to fix things for everybody, so we can really be an equitable and just society."

The 2024 term will count as the fifth time White has served as Warden of Dufferin County. He was first elected to the position in 2017 and went on to serve as Warden from 2019 to 2021. Following the 2021 term, White chose not to seek re-election.

"We're going to be facing some pretty critical challenges over the next 12 months, and Darren certainly has experience in the role and a proven track record. I don't think there's anybody that would question his abil-



PAULA BROWN PHOTO

ELECTED: Melancthon Mayor Darren White was elected as the 147th Warden of Dufferin County during the County's Council meeting on Dec. 15 at the Edelbrock Centre in Orangeville. White has served as Warden previously in 2017 and from 2019 to 2021. He will hold the position through 2024.

ity to fulfill this role and to do it well, so I felt very comfortable with somebody of his level of experience and capabilities to lead us forward over the next 12 months," said Mills, who nominated White for the position.

During the meeting, four chairs were selected to lead the standing committees of County Council.

Orangeville Deputy Mayor Todd Taylor was

selected as chair on the Infrastructure and Environmental Services Committee, Mono Mayor John Creelman will again lead the General Government Services Committee, Orangeville Mayor Lisa Post will oversee the Health and Human Services Committee, and Mulmur Mayor Janet Horner will continue as chair of the Community Development and Tourism Committee.

Rotary celebrates Community Heroes

Written By **Paula Brown**
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Rotary Club of Shelburne is honouring the working of two community heroes by presenting them with awards.

The Rotary Club of Shelburne presented the two recipients with the awards during their Christmas Dinner on Dec. 15. The Rotary Club's motto this year, was 'Create Hope in the World'.

Ardith Dunlop, volunteer co-ordinator for the Shelburne Food Bank, was presented with the Paul Harris Fellow Award. The Paul Harris Fellow Award, is the highest award given by the Rotary Club, and is presented to a person who has been recognized as having done something significant for others.

Dunlop was recognized for her over 20 years of service with the local food bank and for her efforts in leading the fight against food insecurity in Shelburne and the sur-

rounding communities.

As volunteer co-ordinator for the food bank, Dunlop's main duties include scheduling other volunteers, purchasing groceries, picking up groceries at No Frills and Giant Tiger, organizing the Senior's Market with the Rotary Club of Shelburne, fundraising, applying for grants, and much more. Dunlop regularly volunteers four to six days a week at the food bank, sometimes on weekends when she is called for emergency food.

"It was quite an honour to receive this award. I'm one of a whole team of people at the Shelburne Food Bank who work really hard, especially at the Christmas season, to make sure that people in our community have food - so I accept this award on behalf of our team," said Dunlop. "Food insecurity in Shelburne is on the rise and we need everyone to recognize this fact."

Continued on Page 6

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Collections for the day of the holiday and the rest of the week will be shifted to one day later.

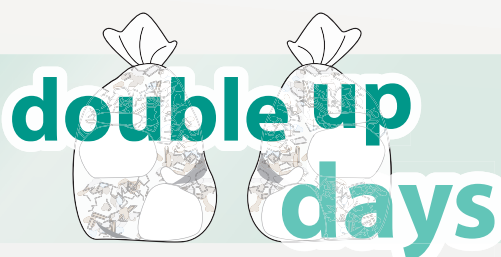
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December 17	December 18	December 19	December 20	December 21	December 22	December 23
double up	CHRISTMAS DAY	December 26	December 27	December 28	December 29	December 30
December 31	NEW YEARS DAY	January 2	January 3	January 4	January 5	January 6
January 7	January 8	January 9	January 10	January 11	January 12	January 13

- Monday ZONE
- Tuesday ZONE
- Wednesday ZONE
- Thursday ZONE
- Interruption no collections

Happy Holidays!

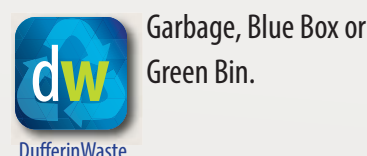
There will be **NO waste collection** on Christmas Day and New Years Day. Please place all garbage, Blue Boxes and Green Bins out **ONE DAY LATER** during the week following Christmas Day & New Years Day.

Place up to **two (2)** untagged bags/containers of garbage out on your collection day during the week following **Christmas Day**.



REMEMBER!

Always search an item on the **DufferinWaste** app to see if it's acceptable in the Dufferin program **before** placing it in the



This holiday season, remember to place the following items in the GREEN BIN:

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Peace on Earth

Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward men. It is the holiday season, and everyone looks forward to seeing family and friends and enjoying everything good about Christmas.

This means giving gifts, having big dinners, going to a few parties, and enjoying a lot of socializing.

The overall meaning of the season is that it's time to put your grudges aside, bury the hatchet, enjoy yourself with your family, and help those less fortunate.

Unfortunately, the world does not always work that way.

There is no peace on Earth, and in many places, there is no goodwill toward your fellow inhabitants of this planet.

There are wars waging at several hot spots around the planet.

The Russian people have apparently not yet been told or realized how many of their sons have died in a useless and futile war that may expand in the near future if the Russian government decides to act on some of its threats. And if it expands to certain countries, we will be obligated to get involved through NATO.

We are currently complicit in that war, whether good or bad, or whether we like it or not, through monetary means and supplying arms.

There are innocent people being held hostage in the Middle East; some of them are very young children who must be confused and scared to death, and some of whom have already been murdered. For those still alive, you can bet that no amount of Christmas cheer will ease their situation.

At the same time, other innocent people who had nothing to do with any of the events that have happened over the past few months are being terrorized by bombs and missiles that have destroyed their

homes. So what happens at Christmas? Hallmark will make the same movie that it made last year, but change the character names and move it to a different town.

King Charles will make a televised Christmas speech, and the Pope will also make some kind of speech – the same one that's been made for the past half-century.

Linus will explain the true meaning of Christmas to Charlie Brown, and Ralphie will once again receive his Red Ryder Range 200 Shot BB gun and shoot himself in the eye with a ricochet, while his father battles his arch enemy in the basement.

Little kids will track Santa Claus on his journey through the NORAD radar system on Christmas Eve but fall asleep before he makes it anywhere near North America.

Children will rise at the crack of dawn and wake their parents to see if Santa did arrive and if he ate the cookies they left out for him.

Many turkeys will be the centrepiece of dinner, to which many people will wear their special Christmas clothes – which cannot be worn on any other day of the year.

Many of us will be missing a person or persons at the dinner table this year who are gone and will never again be part of the family Christmas festivities.

In 1997, Mr. Rogers, the kid's show host who invited you to be his neighbour, received a lifetime achievement award during the Daytime Emmy Awards. He stunned the audience and brought many to tears when he asked them to take 10 seconds to think about a special person who made a difference in their life. Mr. Rogers timed it on his wristwatch.

Maybe this Christmas, you could put aside a few moments to do the same and think of those who have made a big impact

on your life. Maybe during all these festive and traditional moments, you can also reflect on this holiday and why it happens, and remember it is the celebration of the birth of a child, who will grow up to be a man who becomes the most influential person in history.

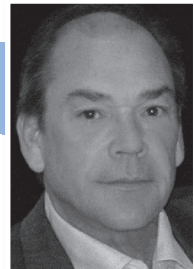
We have a lot to be grateful for in this country. We don't have any enemies dropping bombs on our homes, and we have the

freedom to do almost anything. Christmas is a chance to celebrate more than just receiving gifts and eating and drinking too much.

It's a chance to celebrate life and revel in the miracle that we are all here.

Merry Christmas to all, and to all, a good night.

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



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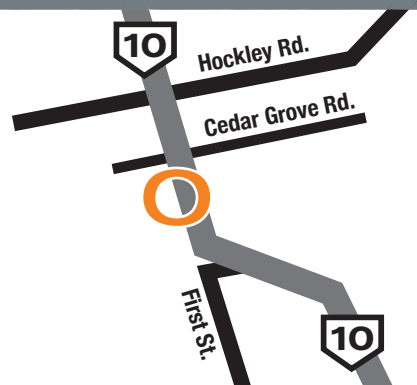


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Continued from PAGE 3

Rotary Club of Shelburne celebrates Community Heroes at Christmas Dinner

The Rotary Club of Shelburne also presented Brian and Jeannette French and their business, Lennox Farms, with the Community Hero Award.

Brian and Jeannette were recognized for their support of the Rotary's many causes includ-

ing the Christmas Hampers and the Senior's Market. The French's have also acted as guest speakers at Rotary meetings and has hosted the service club on their farm.

For the last three years, Lennox Farms has supported the Rotary's Christmas fundraiser

with farm-made perseveres.

Continuing with the family tradition of giving back, the French's daughter is spearheading the holiday food drive at Centre Dufferin District High School in support of the Hamper program.

"Feeling so proud of this honour. It feels extra

special as it was given by an organization whose motto is service above self. Thank you, Rotary Club of Shelburne, for the inspiring work you do in our community. Working together we can all grow," wrote Lennox Farms in a Facebook post.

Centre Dufferin District High School holds annual Winter Donation Drive

Written By Danielle Williams

In the spirit of giving, Centre Dufferin District High School (CDDHS) has demonstrated its commitment to community support with its annual Winter Donation Drive.

From Dec. 6 to 13, CDDHS, in collaboration with the Shelburne Rotary Club and Shepard's Cupboard Food Bank, helped gather donations for the Shelburne Christmas Hamper Program.

CDDHS has assisted in the Winter Christmas Hamper Program for the last three years, proving the enduring commitment

of the school to spread Christmas warmth.

"One of the Student Council's main goals is to bring the community together and support the community. Taking charge and supporting the community is something we like doing," said Kayleigh French, lead organizer and grade 11 student council member.

After receiving plenty of donations in 2022, Kayleigh had some expectations of repeating the same outcome as last year. Unfortunately, recognizing the lack of advertising, the number of donations was less than last year.

"I would hope to have more advertising ahead of time or even collect items earlier," said French. "I know this time of year can be very busy for some students."

The drive invited donations of non-perishable food items, hygiene products (Feminine hygiene, baby products, and body care products), unwrapped children's toys, and gift cards for local stores. The donations concluded with a majority of non-perishable food items and a few toys.

Reflecting on the success of the drive, Stevan Latinovic, a CDDHS teacher and supervisor of the student council,

expressed satisfaction with what the donation drive does for the school.

"The drive went well; we got enough donations that we were able to fill a couple hampers," said Latinovic. "It's always nice to see the students actually actively coming out and supporting the community."

With plans to continue participating in the Winter Christmas Hamper Program, Kayleigh French expresses, "I'm assuming the Rotary Club will continue doing it as long as they have the resources and there will always be people in Centre Dufferin, I hope, that will continue doing it."

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CDDHS seeks more co-op employers

Written By Danielle Williams

Centre Dufferin District High School (CDDHS) is looking to acquire more co-op employers for students seeking a work placement.

Stevan Latinovic, a co-op teacher at CDDHS, noted the many benefits employers provide to students seeking hands-on experience in the working world.

"It [co-op] gives them an opportunity to try out a work environment that they're hopefully interested in," said Latinovic.

"They get to see what is actually part of the job, what are the demands of the job, what are the skills that are required; they may even get some training on the job — whether that's paid for by school or the employer provides that opportunity — and it really just gives them the chance to experience that particular field."

For over 70 years, co-op education has provided high school students the opportunity to explore certain job paths. While ensuring that every co-op student has an equal chance of being placed in the placement of their choice, CDDHS hopes to increase the number of co-op placements available to students.

The focus of co-op is to benefit CDDHS students through hands-on experience in their workplace of choice. Although, Latinovic em-

phasizes that the co-op experience helps both the student and employer.

"Obviously we want to make sure employers have a benefit out of this too," said Latinovic. "Whether that's another hand [on the job] or potentially an employee down the road."

The advantages of the CDDHS co-op course are not limited to those who are directly involved in the co-op process. From a business perspective, co-op can foster growth in the community, given that it enables the community to shape students into future employable adults.

"We want students to be active members of our community," said Latinovic. "The ability for our students to actually participate in business, whether immediately in Shelburne or the surrounding area, is really important for us, so that the students can give back to the people who work in the community."

For those interested in having a co-op student or seeking more information, please contact slatinovic@ugcloud.ca or call (519)-925-3834 ext. 553.

"The big thing for students is that they are walking away with skills that they can use, maybe not in that field necessarily, but in a job further down the road," said Latinovic.

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Festive films that make for a perfect family movie night this season

A family movie night makes for a great way for families to bond and enjoy some relaxing time together. Such nights are a tradition in households across the globe, and they can even become a fun way for extended families to celebrate the holiday days together. When hosting overnight guests this holiday season, hosts can plan a family movie night and line up any of these family-friendly holiday movies.



"A CHRISTMAS STORY" (1983): This beloved classic based on the writings of author Jean Shepherd focuses on young Ralphie Parker and his humorous family. That family includes his father, played by legendary actor Darren McGavin. All Ralphie wants for Christmas is a coveted Red Ryder air rifle, and generations of fans have enjoyed watching this film to see if Ralphie's dream comes true.

"HOME ALONE" (1990): Not unlike "A Christmas Story," this instant classic devotes much of its story to a young boy. Eight-year-old Kevin McAllister (Macaulay Culkin) awakens to an empty house after his parents forgetfully leave him behind as they depart on a holiday trip to Paris with their extended family. That proves to be bad news for bungling burglars Harry (Joe Pesci) and Marv (Daniel Stern), who are outwitted by Kevin at every turn.

ELF (2003): Middle-aged Buddy (Will Ferrell) grew up in the North Pole believing he is an elf, despite being significantly larger than the kind-hearted elves who raised him. Upon learning he is not an actual elf, Buddy is determined to reunite with the father (James Caan) he's never known. Hilarity ensues as the innocent Buddy ends up in the big city in search of his father.

"IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE" (1946): Among the most beloved holiday movies ever made, this classic stars Jimmy Stewart as George Bailey, a devoted family man who set aside his own big-city dreams to save the family business and, ultimately, his small hometown of Bedford Falls. Lamenting some bad luck that leaves him on the cusp of financial ruin, George wishes he'd never been born, only to be shown by an especially kind and patient angel-in-training (Henry Travers) how much worse off Bedford Falls and its residents might have been had George Bailey never existed.

"JINGLE ALL THE WAY" (1996): Featuring a future Governor of California in the lead role, this hijinks-filled holiday classic follows the efforts of Howard Langston (Arnold Schwarzenegger) as he tries to secure the must-have gift of the season for his son, Jamie (Jake Lloyd). Howard soon finds himself competing against a father (Sinbad) who's equally devoted to finding the coveted Turbo-Man action figure.

A holiday movie night makes for a fun, family-friendly evening when hosting overnight guests during this special time of year.

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Holiday Sugar Cookies



Serves: 36
Prep time: 20 minutes + 2 hours
Cook Time: 30-36 mins

Ingredients:
4 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
3/4 tsp salt
1 cup unsalted butter (softened)
1 cup of white sugar
2 large eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Directions:
1. In a bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt.
2. In a separate bowl, beat the butter and sugar until fluffy.
3. Beat in eggs one at a time - while scraping down the sides of the bowl. Once combined, beat in the vanilla.
4. Slowly add the flour mixer to the butter-sugar mixer and mix until well incorporated.
5. Divide the dough into half, shape

into 2 disks and wrap tightly with plastic wrap. Place in the fridge for 2 hours or up to 2 days.

6. Once the dough is chilled, preheat the oven to 375°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

7. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to a 1/4" thickness. Cut out shapes using floured cookie cutters. Re-roll the dough as needed for more cookies.

NOTE: If the dough has chilled for more than 2 hours, let it sit at room temperature for 20-30 minutes or until softened enough to roll out.

8. Place cut cookies on a baking sheet. Add sprinkles if using. Bake for 10 - 12 minutes or until the bottom and edges start to turn golden. Once baked, let cool for a few minutes, then transfer to a wire rack and cool completely.

NOTE: If decorating with icing ensure that the cookies are completely cooled.

Tips and tricks for cutting out cookies

Baking is a holiday tradition in many households. The aroma of freshly baked cakes, pies and cookies wafts through the air of many homes this time of year, and that makes the holiday season even more special.

Cut cookies are some of the most popular cookies to make during the holiday season. Some families may have their share of favourite cookie-cutter shapes and dough recipes. Certain techniques can make holiday baking sessions easier and ensure consistent results.

- ✿ Work on a lightly floured, cool surface, such as a cutting board or stone countertop. Never work on a warm surface, which can cause dough to spread and stick.

- ✿ Roll out the dough between two sheets of baking or parchment paper. Betty Crocker recommends a thickness of about 1/8 inch unless noted in the recipe. This prevents the dough from sticking, and parchment enables you to easily transfer rolled-out dough to a refrigerator or elsewhere.

- ✿ When rolling out dough, portion it out into a few smaller amounts to roll out more easily. This will also help it to chill more readily.

- ✿ Cookies cut most easily when the dough is chilled. Refrigerate the dough for as long as possible, ideally an hour or more - even overnight. The more chilled, the firmer the dough will be.

- ✿ Rubber rolling pin rings that slip onto each side of the rolling pin can help ensure that the dough is being rolled out to a uniform thickness.

- ✿ Dip cookie cutters into flour with each cut. Work from the centre and move out to the edges when cutting out your designs. Try to maximize space and avoid scraps and re-rolling.

- ✿ Some expert bakers say that metal cookie cutters cut cleaner than plastic ones. Whichever cutter you use, cut the cookie by pressing it straight down; try not to twist or jiggle the cookie cutter when using it. Doughs with a high butter content can help, as the extra grease helps separate the dough from the cutters.

- ✿ If cut cookies have gotten warmer, place them in the freezer for a few minutes to firm up again and then cook. This will guarantee the cookies will not spread or distort while baking.

Extra steps may seem like they will take a lot of time. However, the extra effort and attention to detail will help produce cookies that win rave reviews.



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A guide to picking the perfect fresh Christmas tree



Choose your species

Do some homework on the type of tree you want prior to buying the tree. Balsam fir and Fraser fir are popular Christmas tree varieties, but there are many others, such as noble fir and Norway spruce. Balsams are known for having the most fragrant smell,

but Frasers tend to keep their needles the longest. For those who prefer a Douglas fir, keep in mind that they sometimes drop their needles prematurely due to foliar diseases like needle-cast fungus.

Space for ornaments

In addition to aroma and needle longevity, look for trees that have a desirable shape and allow for adequate space between branches, advises the home and garden resource The Spruce. Trees groomed to be lush and full will look beautiful unadorned, but once ornaments are added, full branches may cause those ornaments to hang low or even fall off. Trees with sparse branches allow for ornaments to hang straight.

Measure your space

Trees in the field or in a lot may look much smaller than they do when brought into the living room. Don't make the mistake of selecting a tree that is too large for your home. The agricultural firm Ragan & Masey says to measure the room from floor to ceiling and subtract the height of the tree stand and tree topper. It's equally important to measure the width of the area where the tree will stand and allow for ample space for foot traffic around the tree.

Perform a needle check

Every tree will drop some needles, and most evergreens hold their foliage. Modest needle loss is not an indicator of a poor tree. However, Decker's Nursery in Greenlawn, NY says

if 50 percent of the needles are lost when you swipe your hand down three to five different branches around the tree, the tree likely is not a good choice. In addition, avoid a tree that has glaring defects in the trunk as it can impede water flow through the tree.

Heavier is better

A heavy pre-cut tree means it is full of water and has been cut more recently. A healthy, fresh tree is going to require an effort to lift. Older, dried-out trees will not be heavy.

Upon arriving home, make a fresh cut off the tree trunk and get it in water as soon as possible — even if that's a bucket until the tree stand can be set up.

Fun books to read to children this holiday season

THE HOLIDAY SEASON is a special time of year for people of all ages, but children might be the most enthusiastic celebrants come December. Children spend much of the holiday season anticipating the arrival of the man in the red suit, and that enthusiasm can be contagious.

Families have their own unique traditions during the holiday season, but one popular way to harness kids' enthusiasm at Christmas is to read them holiday stories. There's no shortage of great holiday books for kids, but here are a handful that kids may remember well into adulthood.

❄️ **"The Polar Express," by Chris Van Allsburg:** The beloved tale is the story of a young boy who boards a mysterious train bound for the North Pole.

❄️ **"The Littlest Elf," by Brandi Dougherty:** Part of a series, this story focuses on a tiny elf named Oliver and a series of misadventures as he navigates his way through Santa's workshop.

❄️ **"Olive, the Other Reindeer," by Vivian Walsh:** Olive is no ordinary reindeer. In fact, Olive is a dog who heads to the North Pole believing she is a reindeer. Her decision to join Santa's team ultimately benefits the big man and his trusty reindeer.

❄️ **"The Miracle of the First Poinsettia: A Mexican Christmas Story," by Joanne Oppenheim:** A little girl named Juanita is the star of this retelling of a traditional Mexican tale with a valuable lesson.

❄️ **"Gingerbread Mouse: A Christmas Holiday Book for Kids," by Katy Braton:**

A fallen tree branch almost ruins Christmas for Mouse, whose determination and resourcefulness mixed in with a little Christmas magic ensures she finds a place to call home in time for the holidays.

❄️ **"A Night in Santa's Great Big Bag," by Kristin Kladstrup:**

Santa saves the day in this tale starring a young boy's favourite stuffed animal, whose excitement for Christmas compels him to climb into Santa's big bag of presents on Christmas Eve.

❄️ **"Twas the Night Before Christmas:** Edited by Santa Claus for the Benefit of Children

of the 21st Century," by Clement C. Moore: Parents will appreciate this updated version of the popular tale that, among other things, has removed the reference to Santa smoking.

❄️ **"How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" by Dr. Seuss:** Children can join generations of fans that came before them as they hear the redemption story of the Grinch who was once determined to ruin Christmas for the happy people of Who-ville.

❄️ **"The Nutcracker," by the New York City Ballet:** The classic story is retold based on famed choreographer George Balanchine's production.

The holiday season is steeped in tradition. Reading new and classic holiday stories to children is one tradition any family can embrace.



Wherever your travels take you this season, we wish you a **Merry Christmas** and a safe and happy **New Year!**

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Season's Greetings 2023

How to involve kids with holiday baking

The holiday season is steeped in tradition. Many holiday traditions are centred around food, with much of the focus on all of the decadent treats and desserts taking centre stage at many family gatherings.

Many parents hope to involve their children in as many family holiday traditions as they can. Holiday baking is one kid-friendly tradition, and parents can make it even more so by taking a few simple steps before they get started.



Purchase kid-friendly baking equipment
Bakers rely on lots of tools to make cookies, cakes and other delicacies. That equipment is even available in kids' sizes. Kids may be more excited about baking if they have their own equipment, and such gear also can make it easier for them to lend a hand. A spatula made for youngsters can make it easier for kids to move cookies from a baking sheet to a platter, while colourful measuring cups and their own whisk can excite youngsters about baking.

Plan ahead
Seasoned bakers know that it's imperative to have the right supplies, including ingredients, on hand before beginning a baking session. That's even more necessary when baking with kids, who might not be as patient as moms and dads hope if a baking

session has to be paused to run to the store for a missing ingredient or to dig out some tools from the back of the pantry. Plan ahead by setting everything out and assembling all the necessary ingredients the night before you plan to bake.

Delegate wisely
Young kids may want to do everything mom and dad do, but baking is a delicate science that requires careful attention to detail and a strict adherence to recipes. So it's important that parents delegate wisely when involving children in holiday baking. Whisking, stirring and topping off cookies with frosting and sprinkles are fun, kid-friendly tasks.

Add some fun foods to the menu
If you plan to bake holiday cookies, purchase kid-

friendly holiday cookie cutters before your baking session so youngsters have as much fun as possible. Kids may have more fun if they get to make Santa Claus, Frosty or Rudolph cookies.

Make a mess
Don't be afraid to get a little messy when baking with children. Moms and dads may love a clean kitchen, but kids tend to have more fun in the kitchen when things get a little messy. Douse each other with a little flour and make a joke of things if some ingredients find their way onto the counter or the floor instead of into your mixing bowl.

Parents can make the holiday baking that much more fun by letting their kids pitch in this year.



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Starting in 2024, the Town of Shelburne will be making it easier to purchase or renew dog tags!

The Town of Shelburne is delighted to partner with DocuPet, a world-leading pet profile, lost pet, and licensing platform. Pet owners will now receive a complimentary 24/7 lost pet service along with colourful and unique designer ID tags linked to a secure online profile when they license their dogs.



Residents will have the ability to order personalized tags online! Additionally the Town will update the licensing window from a calendar year approach to a 365-day model. Previously, dog licenses expired annually on December 31st, but through the new partnership with DocuPet, licenses are now valid for 365 days after purchase. This means that no matter what time of year residents purchase a dog's license, it will be valid for 365 days.

Stay tuned for more updates on the Town's social media and news articles at www.shelburne.ca



WINTER REMINDERS

The Town would like to remind residents and visitors of the following winter maintenance guidelines:

- Do not shovel, plow or blow snow on roads or sidewalks. This causes unsafe road conditions and is also against the law. If you have cleared your driveway, but Snowplows have not cleared your street, be prepared for a windrow at the bottom of your driveway.
- Do not place your waste bins on snowbanks, icy surfaces, or on the road. Instead shovel a part of the curb area when possible to make room for waste bins, or place waste bins at the end of your driveway.
- Winter Parking restrictions in effect. No vehicles are to be parked on any roadway between 12:00am and 8:00am every day.
- Stay safe and stay off Storm Water Management Ponds, they are not for recreation. Do not toboggan or skate on Storm Water Management Ponds.
- Always drive according to road and weather conditions. Roads and sidewalks that haven't been cleared may be slippery, please take extra time and caution when travelling.

The Town is committed to keeping all roads and sidewalks safe during the winter months and completes winter maintenance in accordance with the Ontario Minimum Maintenance Standards.

Staff make every effort to clear roads and sidewalks as quickly and effectively as possible and ask that residents please allow 24 hours after a snowstorm to make any clearing requests.



REPORT A CONCERN

Contact the Town's Operations Team for issues regarding snow clearing, grass damage or any other maintenance concerns. Report A Concern online, call 519-925-2600 ext. 261, or email jkaske@shelburne.ca.

For more information visit www.shelburne.ca/en/town-hall/winter-maintenance.aspx.



SHELBURNE SPORTS

Royals seniors win second game of the season over Norwell District

Written By **Brian Lockhart**

The Centre Dufferin District High School Royals senior basketball team is 2-0 after playing two opening games in the District 4 season.

In the first game of the season on Dec. 6, they hammered Emmanuel Christian High School from Fergus, 61-8.

The second game of the season had the Royals matched up against the skilled Norwell District Secondary School Reds on the court at CDDHS on Monday, Dec. 11.

Both teams put up a really good effort in what was the second game for both teams this year.

The Royals took an early lead in the game, with the score 34-22 at the half. They extended that lead to 20 points by the end of the third quarter with a 51-31 lead.

The Reds had some success in the fourth quarter and closed the gap in scoring but couldn't catch the Royals.

CDDHS left the court with a 66-49 win.

"We played good, we got good looks, we had good passes, we got open shots and open lay-ups," summed up Royals point guard Hayden

Stephenson after the game. "On defence, we were really good. We had the insides clogged; everything was good."

The Royals had a lot of success hitting baskets and setting up some pretty wild plays during the game.

"I think it was a good game," said Royals forward William Day. "We could have done more to protect the perimeter and keep our hands up more, but other than that, I think we really did well. On defence, we were keeping them up the middle."

Four teams have been entered in District 4 competition this year, so there is only a six-game regular season schedule before the teams go into playoffs.

In addition to CDDHS and Norwell, there are teams from Westside Secondary School in Orangeville and Emmanuel Christian High School in Fergus.

The Royals played their final regular season schedule home game on Wednesday, Dec. 20, with results not available at press time.

They will finish the season with road games against Emmanuel Christian and Norwell District before heading into the playoffs.



BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

WIN STREAK: Centre Dufferin District High School (CDDHS) Royals forward Churchill Unugbro caught big air on a layup and sank a basket during the third quarter of the Royals game against the Norwell District Secondary School Reds in the gym at CDDHS on Monday, Dec. 11. The Royals left the court with a 66-49 win for their second win of the season.

Shelburne Wolves U13 Rep team raises funds for food bank

Written By **Brian Lockhart**

The Shelburne Wolves U13 Rep team is more than just hockey players; they are members of the community who have decided to give back during this Christmas season.

It was the players' idea to do something as a team for the holiday season to benefit others in the community.

The team decided to collect money, food, and toys to be given to the Shepherd's Cupboard Food Bank in Shelburne.

The kids managed to raise \$400. That cost was matched by Main Street Family Dental in Shelburne. Giant Tiger in Shelburne also pledged \$100 to make it an even \$900 that the kids raised for the Christmas season.

"Each player donated \$20 of their own money," explained Keri Glasgow, a parent with a child on the team. "It was their own money. Then at the office at Main Street Fam-

ily Dental, the doctor [Dr. Chan] said what ever they came up with, he would match. The kids collected the \$400, and the office matched it and Giant Tiger also contributed. They went to Giant Tiger and bought toys, food, and clothing, to be donated to the Shepherd's Cupboard Food Bank. The kids themselves wanted to give back to the community this year."

The Food Bank serves Shelburne and the surrounding area.

The team arrived at the Food Bank on Tuesday, Dec. 12, and brought a truckload of the gifts inside.

They were very enthusiastic about being able to contribute to the community and make someone else's Christmas a little brighter this year.

The Shelburne Wolves U13 Rep team is having a good season on the ice and enjoying playing their favourite sport.

Library's top reads for 2023

The Shelburne Public Library shared the following message with Shelburne Free Press readers this week:

"Watch our social media in the coming days for the top reads of 2023, including our top reads selected by Staff! Stay tuned for more details on the new and exciting programming we have in store for 2024!"

Top 5 Fiction Reads for 2023 at your library

1. World of Curiosities by Louise Penny
2. The Challenge by Danielle Steel

3. Heart Bones by Colleen Hoover
4. Desert Star by Michael Connelly
5. Encore in Death by J.D. Robb

Holiday Hours

- December 27th : 10am-5pm
- December 28th: 10am-5pm
- December 29th: 10am-5pm
- December 30th: Closed
- December 31st: Closed
- January 1st: Closed
- January 2nd: Closed

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



BILLY DARES

"I like the team aspect and playing with people you know and making friends," said Shelburne Wolves U18 LL player, Billy Dares, of why he likes playing the sport. "It's competitive – that's one of the best things I like about it."

Billy has been on the ice since he was just three years-old and brings a lot of experience to his team. When he's not on the ice, Billy plays soccer during the summer.

TEAM: SHELBURNE WOLVES U18 LL

POSITION: FORWARD

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Sunday Service & Children's Ministry • 11:00am

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www.shelburneprimrose.com

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Pastors Gregory & Sandra Marshall
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Email address: info@rwcministry.org

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Thanks for shopping local! ♥



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Priest: The Rev. William Willis

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OBITUARIES

FAZACKERLEY, CORRIE 1944-2023

My Mom, Cornelia Johanna Grootoonk, emigrated from Holland with her parents and a younger sister Diene in 1952. Diene and my mom remain forever close. Back then, families had to have a sponsor to enter the country and were required to live with that sponsor for a year. Hers was a chicken farmer she told me. They lived in not much more than a chicken coop for that first year and then on to many a skittish rental I'm told. Her dad, my Opa, eventually landed a job with SKF and then purchased a house sometime in the early 60's in east end Scarborough. I can still say my bedtime prayers in Dutch.



Always in and around the Scarborough area, my Mom spent 40+ years working for Oshawa Foods in various capacities. She met my dad Ron and they married on February 14, 1964. We lived with my grandparents for some time until we moved to our very own apartment. I think I was about 10 then. Eventually, my parents bought a house in Scarborough. The new location meant I had to change where I would attend junior high. Not sure how, (sure she probably didn't tell anyone) but my Mom kept me together with my public school friends in junior high. She would drive me in the morning and I'd ride the transit bus back just like any other 70's latchkey kid.

My dad accepted an offer in about 1975 to move this way. I cried when I found out there was no mall in Shelburne. Following a forced haircut, it was my mom that came to get me one day (in her 1971 six-cylinder green Mustang) after "running away" and making it as far as the DVP and Lawrence Ave. on a purple CCM 10-speed bicycle with a wobbly back wheel.

My parents made a life here. They loved and participated openly in the community. I still live together with my wife in the same house my parents purchased here in about 1976. If you're reading this and you knew them, then you knew them both. They are pictured above - together - as I remember them - as you may remember them.

Yes...these are but my musings.

My dad's death was slow and cruel; my Mom's sudden and unexpected. She was never afflicted by any serious ailment or ever supported by prescribed drug. In fact, just a week earlier, you might have seen her 20' up teetering on her roof blowing out the eaves! Always dressed to the 9's...broach on every day and cleaning the museum like organized house twice on Sundays! My kids laugh when I tell them about having to bounce a quarter every morning atop my best effort, freshly made bed before she would let me leave for school.

It pains me immensely to write a second parental obit in what seems to me only a few short days after the first. There is no better descriptor I know than simply saying it sucks as you age, to watch family and friends pass away around you. When you now find that your first attention is no longer in the headlines, rather the back page announcements. I don't mean to drag anyone down who may be reading this. As I write, there is obviously a flood of overwhelming memories, thoughts and stories I haven't given much attention to until now. If my reflections bring any memories for you, of you and your loved ones, then I'd say intent of purpose accomplished! What wonderful memories there are...

My mom exited on her own terms and time and we are forever grateful to the medical staff at Headwaters for allowing that final brave decision.

Many times we simply don't get to say goodbye. Not only did we with the entire family in tow, but so did she. Cognizant, alive, full of remaining life and laughter...even with a failing body.

What an absolutely wonderful and beautiful moment that was!

My purpose here is/was to provide some final tribute to my Mom — a quick glimpse or reminder to you of her and who she was, but really this is for me. You may read this once. I will read it a thousand times and each time I do, I will have a new thought or memory.

If I might leave anything with you as she did with me, it is I hope the recognition (or reminder) that your parents love you unconditionally as you do with your own children if fortunate enough to have them.

To all who have expressed such kind words to my family and I and to the caring staff at Headwaters — thank you!

There will be no arrangements. Give someone a hug and tell em' you love em' while you can!

mike.fazackerley@matthewscott.com

CAROLYN MARY JOHNSON (LAVERTY)

Carolyn's family, friends and community mourn her death at Saint John Regional Hospital in New Brunswick on December 11, 2023. Carolyn was 53 years old and leaves behind the love of her life, her husband Larry Johnson, her mother-in-law Shirley Johnson, her loving parents Glenn and Mary Laverty, her siblings Ed Laverty (Roz), Jennifer Irving (Neil), Sandra Hawkins (Jerry), and her cherished nieces and nephews, Ashley Leitch (Chris), Chad Farrell, Jake Farrell, Dale Farrell (Ang), Kelly Farrell-Smyth (Erik), Charles, Jill (Nathan), Colin, Olyndra, and Neelah Irving, and Ella and Willow Hawkins and grand-nephews Axel, Levi and Wyatt Farrell and Max and Theo Irving and her fur-babies, Parker and Smidge Johnson. She is predeceased by her beloved nephew Darrell Laverty and her grandparents Allan and Gladys Laverty and Ernest and Lilian Peters.



Carolyn grew up on a potato farm in Honeywood Ontario and loved her summers at the cottage on Kahshe Lake. She was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes at the age of 4 and her Grandma Laverty described her just four months later as a "great wee girl" who "knows exactly what she can eat and very rarely complains". She stoically lived her life refusing to let the disease define her or stop her. She was determined to do anything her siblings and cousins could do—even knocking out her two front teeth in a bicycling accident at the age of 10 to prove it.

Carolyn worked at The Nottawasaga Inn Resort and Conference Centre for almost 20 years. She had a kidney-pancreas transplant in 2012 which meant she was finally able to live her life without diabetes. Unfortunately a post-transplant complication resulted in an acquired brain injury and the loss of her short-term memory. Carolyn's determination (and the generosity of the Biffis family) allowed her to return to work at The Nott in 2013. In 2022, Carolyn and Larry decided it was time to embrace living life to the fullest and retired early. They made the big move to New Brunswick with Larry's mother Shirley and hoped to spend the next chapter of their lives together enjoying the slower, rural life in a setting much like Carolyn grew up in.

Carolyn was a loyal friend and kept in close contact with her many aunts, uncles and cousins, and the friends she made in high school, college and everywhere she lived and worked. Carolyn was a true survivor and modelled for all who knew her how to live life with strength and courage, perseverance and hope. She will be missed by many.

Donations in memory of Carolyn can be made to Diabetes Canada.

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CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13	
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60									61			62	63		
64									65			66			
67									68			69			

CLUES ACROSS

1. Droops

5. Subatomic particle

10. Not in danger

14. Nursemaid

15. Black band worn in mourning

16. Long song in opera

17. Edible seed of a Philippine tree

18. Chicago political family

19. Pursues pleasure from one place to another

20. Appetizer

22. Hill (Celtic)

23. Simple shoe

24. Songs to one you love

27. Secret activities

30. Upset

31. Popular hot drink

32. Body art (slang)

35. Fired

37. Blood relation

38. Identical

39. Porticos

40. Partner to cheese

41. Type of sword

42. Enough (archaic)

43. Surface layer of ground

44. Cotton fabric woven like satin

45. Choose for a post

46. Father

47. Tell on

48. Indian title of respect

49. Fonts

52. Fencing sword

55. Mock

56. Vaccine developer

60. Atmosphere surrounding a person or place

61. Marten with a short tail

63. Chinese temple

64. Invests in little enterprises

65. Popular cut of meat

66. Charity

67. Iron-containing compound

68. River in Northern Europe

69. One point east of southeast

CLUES DOWN

1. Exhausts

2. Genus of fish related to gars

3. Impudent behavior

4. Adherents to Islam

5. They come after A

6. Spoke

7. Room to receive guests

8. About opera

9. End-blown flute

10. Heroic tales

11. Member of a Semitic people

12. Dog's name

13. Opposite of west

21. Political divisions in ancient Greece

23. Ocean

25. Cool!

26. Young woman about to enter society

27. One from central Caucasus

28. Indian city

29. A way to serve ice cream

32. Emaciation

33. Escort aircraft

carrier

34. Italian city

36. Mythical settler of Kansas

37. Unhappy

38. High schoolers' test

40. Measured in pace

41. Satisfies

43. Gullible person

44. Enclosed space

46. Substance used to color something

47. Shirt type

49. Discover by investigation

50. ___Castell, makers of pens

51. Semitic Sun god

52. Grads wear one

53. French river

54. Part of a cap

57. Digestive fluid

58. Metrical foot

59. Body part

61. Very fast airplane

62. Supplement with difficulty

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