



Behind the ice at the Balena Rink

by Jonathan Lemieux

Each winter, as the temperatures dip and the snow begins to fall, the Balena community rink quietly comes to life, lit each evening under the rink lights. Smooth ice, cleared snow, a spot to skate or play hockey—things that appear effortless from the outside—are the result of considerable coordination and dedication that take place out of sight.

At the centre of that effort is Trevor. He keeps an eye on conditions, sets the flooding schedule, and makes sure everything stays on track. Each night after 9:00 p.m., volunteers rotate through the work — first shoveling snow, scraping and then flooding the rink; adjusting for weather that rarely co-operates. While Trevor leads the effort, the rink exists because people reliably show up, night after night, to maintain it.

In addition, Stephanie leads a group of volunteers that keep the building at Balena Park, referred



PHOTO: TREVOR DENIS

to as the field house, open. The field house provides skaters with a warm, sheltered location to lace up their skates, escape the weather, and have access to restrooms,

adding an important layer of comfort and accessibility.

With areas for hockey and recreational skating, the rink serves as a community gathering place

for individuals of all ages and skill levels. It takes teamwork to preserve the ice, especially during warmer weather or thaws, when

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Coronation Woods.
PHOTO: GREG MONEY

Protecting Coronation Woods and Other Local Greenspaces

By Lynne Patenaude, Friends of Riverview Park Greenspaces & Ottawa South Eco-action Network

We are so lucky to have mature forests and natural areas in Riverview Park and nearby! Many of these natural areas are known primarily to local walkers and naturalists. Some of the natural areas closest to our neighbourhood are

on city land (Coronation Woods, Hospital Woods East, Pleasant Park Woods) and others are on federal land (Hospital Woods West, Hurdman Woods, Vincent Massey Woods).

Coronation Woods is a City of Ottawa Significant Woodland, as it is at least 60 years old and, at almost three hectares, is greater than the 0.8 hectare size requirement for this designation. This

woodland dates from before Riverview Park was developed. It is mostly sugar maple, including some very old trees, as well as many species of trees that are less common in our region like bitternut hickory, rock elm and bur oak. In the spring, you will find the forest floor carpeted with native yellow trout lilies.

Coronation Woods has been

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Coronation Woods

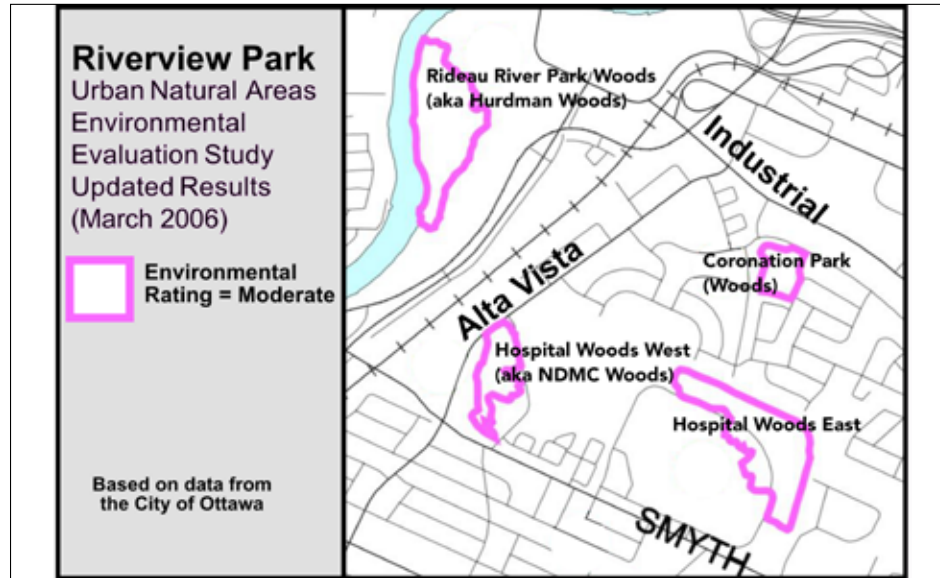
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recognized for many years as an Urban Natural Feature (UNF) in Ottawa. You may have heard recently about the city's proposed rezoning of Coronation Woods as part of Zoning Bylaw changes. While doing research for a possible grant application, I checked on the geoOttawa map on the city's website and found that while Coronation Woods has had a unique Environmental Protection zoning for many years, in the last Zoning Bylaw consultation draft in late summer 2025, city staff proposed merging the park and the woods into a single Recreation zone for administrative reasons. The Riverview Park Community Association (RPCA) has significant concerns about this proposed change, given the large range of permitted uses of Recreational land (amusement park, artist studio, theatre, etc.) compared to Environmental Protection zoning.

RPCA is grateful to Alta Vista Councillor Marty Carr who put forward a motion that passed unanimously at the December 17, 2025 City of Ottawa Planning Committee meeting to maintain the Environmental Protection zoning for Coronation Woods. This change remains to be approved at the January 28 city council meeting.

The purpose of the Environmental Protection Zone is to:

- Recognize lands which are designated in the Official Plan as Significant Wetlands, Natural Environment Areas, Urban Natural Features, Greenbelt Natural Area, and Greenbelt Natural Linkage that



Owen Clarkin of the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club points out a bitternut hickory tree at the Jane's Walk in Coronation Woods in May 2025. PHOTO: LYNNE PATENAUDE

contain important environmental resources which must be protected for ecological, educational and recreational reasons.

- Permit only those uses which are compatible with and assist in the protection of the environmental attributes of these lands, or are in keeping with applicable Official Plan policies.
- Regulate development to minimize the impact of any buildings or structures within these environmental areas.



Yellow trout lily blooms in Coronation Woods in late April and early May. PHOTO AND MAP: LYNNE PATENAUDE



Coronation Park sign.


PHOTO: GREG MONEY

Coronation Park/Woods was one of almost two hundred sites assessed in the "Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation Study" done by Bernie Muncaster and Daniel Brunton for the City of Ottawa in 2005 following amalgamation. The map above is a revised version done in March 2006 and includes a sub-section that shows our local Urban Natural Areas (UNA) and their ratings.

Each UNA was assigned a number and its location is outlined on the map. The outlined areas for each UNA are colour-coded based on environmental rating: red for high, pink for moderate and green for low. Nine evaluation criteria were used to rate ecological value: connectivity, absence of disturbance, habitat maturity, natural communities, regeneration, representative flora, significant flora and fauna, size and shape and wildlife habitat. Site visits were conducted to carry out the evaluations.

Ottawa South Eco-action Network obtained the full study and related documents from co-author Bernie Muncaster and has shared them on its website (<https://www.osean.org/blog/stopthenc> - look for Urban Natural Areas). The documents available include a satellite photo and detailed environmental evaluation for each Urban Natural Area. This is a treasure trove of information for anyone interested in Ottawa's natural history. The evaluation for Coronation Woods (Urban Natural Area #163) resulted in a Moderate rating. The study notes that this forest is a "superb remnant woodland with well-formed, tall canopy and excellent canopy regeneration, though unusually sparse herbaceous ground flora" with 31 native plant species. Naturalists have added more recent observations on Ottawa's flora and fauna on iNaturalist Canada that build on this work.

Look for news in spring of a call for volunteers to work with Friends of Riverview Park Green Spaces on invasive removal projects and related restoration of native plants in 2026. You can reach me at communications@riverviewparkca.com.




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Around Riverview Park



Behind the ice

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

staying off the surface protects hours of volunteer effort and extends the rink's useful life.

The rink will once again be a focal point during the Riverview Park Community Association's Winter Carnival on February 8, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., highlighting the behind-the-scenes work that makes these shared winter moments possible.

Additional volunteers are always welcome to help staff the field house, assist with shoveling or flooding the rink. Those interested can contact balenarink@gmail.com or find Balena Park Rink on Facebook.

PHOTOS: TREVOR DENIS







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The Better Business Bureau: the story behind its Accreditation Seals

By Carole Moulton

There is a blue and white seal near the entrances of over 1,000 businesses around the City of Ottawa. And, you have no doubt seen one of these many times. This seal may not appear to be a very large one, however, the message behind the logo is significant. These are Better Business Bureau (BBB) Accreditation Seals, and across North America they can be found in hundreds of thousands of businesses from large to small.

The torch in the logo symbolizes the “light” of ethics, integrity, and trust in the marketplace. The emblem is used to identify accredited businesses that have been recognized for their ethical behaviour. The accreditation process is one where businesses must meet high BBB standards.

The very existence of the non-profit Better Business Bureau stems back to 1912, when a committee of advertising executives and businesses joined together to challenge what they saw as widespread deceptive advertising practises. The results of a high-profile government



Vikta Paulo, Region Director of Ottawa Better Business Bureau®

lawsuit in 1906: United States v. Forty Barrels and Twenty Kegs of Coca-Cola motivated the group. Much credit has been given to a gentleman named Samuel Candler Dobbs of the American Advertising Federation, who had, for a number of years, been advocating for truth in advertising.

The committee called themselves the National Vigilance Committee and ‘aimed to restore public trust by setting ethical

standards, handling complaints, and encouraging truthful advertising’. By 1916, the National Vigilance Committee began ‘transitioning’ its name to the Better Business Bureau, establishing bureaus, first locally, and then eventually across the nation. There are now over 92 local bureaus across North America, independently operated and funded through accreditation fees. Nearly 400,000 local businesses in North America are accredited by the BBB.

Canada’s first bureau was opened in 1928. And, unknown to many, for a number of years, the Headquarters for the Ottawa Bureau was located here in Riverview Park at 700 Industrial Avenue. Currently, a team of five work out of their Better Business Bureau of Greater Ottawa location at 116 Albert Street. Canada has six regional offices that cover consumers from coast to coast.

Today, the Better Business Bureau has two main focuses. One is to do with the bureau’s degree of confidence that a business is operating in good faith and will resolve customer concerns filed with the BBB, while the second is alerting consumers about scams

and best practises to protect themselves as a consumer. Press releases are consistently provided, and sent out to as many available resources as possible.

The Better Business Bureau rating system incorporates an A+ through F letter-grade scale. There are hundreds of categories of businesses available to research, and consumers do not need to belong to the BBB to check whether certain businesses meet the BBB standards.

“More than ever, we’re living in a time when businesses and technology are advancing at a rapid rate,” notes Vikta Paulo of the Better Business Bureau of Greater Ottawa. “Even with the introduction of AI,” he adds, “the Better Business Bureau mandate doesn’t change.”

It is a well-known fact that the Better Business Bureau (BBB) continues to be an essential resource for consumers and businesses alike, while helping to establish trust and transparency in the marketplace between the two. Yes, the bridge the Better Business Bureau creates is a vital one, and has been as such for over 100 years.

Riverview Park Winter Carnival

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~ February 18, in person & online at 7 pm

Lenten Evening Services
~February 25, March 4, 11, 18 & 25, at 7 pm on Zoom
Find the link on our website, under upcoming events.

Palm Sunday
~ March 29 ~ With communion, at 10 am at Emmanuel.

Maundy Thursday
~April 2 ~ In person, 7:15 to 7:45 pm at Emmanuel.

Good Friday
~April 3 ~ A joint service with the Ottawa Mennonite Church, at 10:00 am at Emmanuel.

Easter Sunday
~ April 5 ~ In person Sunrise Service at 8 am, followed by refreshments for those staying for the regular service.
~In person & online at 10 am at Emmanuel.

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TECH TIPS

News and updates

by Malcolm and John Harding,
of Compu-Home

PRICES of tech equipment are likely to rise noticeably fairly soon. Frankly, we have been a bit surprised that prices have been quite stable for the past year in the face of unusually high demand, but good things seldom last forever. As devices become more sophisticated, their components are often more challenging to manufacture and prices are bound to reflect that. Another basic fact is that wherever in the world the devices are manufactured, we in Canada almost always buy them from sources in the USA and it is not news that tariffs and supply chain issues can be described as at the least, chaotic.

Importers into the United States and their Canadian counterparts along the chain have been absorbing increased costs to some extent, thinking that these increases were probably only temporary, or that they could be recovered by taking the American federal government to court, but most are now announcing they cannot afford for this to continue

and consumers will be feeling significantly more pain before long.

TRAVEL with your cell phone may become simplified and possibly even less expensive, with the introduction of the **eSIM** (Embedded SIM card). The traditional SIM card is a plastic chip that is inserted into the phone to enable communication between the device and the cellular carrier... similar to an ID card. For many users in recent years, the first stop in a foreign airport has been at a kiosk to buy and install a local SIM card, so that the phone can be used without incurring roaming charges back home. The eSIM can now replace the physical chip with a digital equivalent downloaded onto the phone, to allow plans and features that are more easily changed when necessary. Additional benefits of the eSIM are such features as making it easier to switch between carriers and even offering the possibility of one phone having two telephone numbers.

COOKIES (the digital kind) have a checkered reputation.

They are tiny files that are installed when we are browsing to make it more efficient, but when thousands of them accumulate they take up space on our hard drives and more recently they are being blamed for making our browsing history available to the outside world in ways that we might rather avoid. Deleting cookies is relatively easy and has become a strategy that makes us feel like we are protecting our privacy but actually that is only the first step, if we want to do the job properly. Search for "*Clearing Cookies is Useless...*" by Gavin Phillips in makeuseof.com for a thorough (but geeky) approach to Internet security, or google "Secure Browsing Habits" to find several effective strategies that you can easily adopt.

Software for INCOME TAX Year 2025 has become more complicated. Although Macintosh users have, by now, become accustomed to the fact that several popular titles do not have a Mac edition, the area is now muddied even further by some publishers also not supporting Microsoft Operating Systems pri-

or to Windows 11. Turbo Tax and UFile, two of the most popular titles in this field, have gone this Windows-11-only route. We fear that many users who have not yet adopted Windows 11 will buy software without realizing that they cannot use it! There are two options available as workarounds: a) you can switch to another package that is compatible with your Operating System, or b) you can use an online, web-based version that will run on any browser (Macintosh or Windows) without any specific Operating System requirement.

Sadly, at the time of writing, the Federal Government's Canada.ca certified tax software page has not been updated to be helpful for Canadians looking for guidance for the 2025 Income Tax year. We hope that by the time you are reading this, the page has been brought up to date.

We love feedback! Contact Compu-Home at 613-731-5954 to discuss this column, share your opinions and suggest future columns. Our email address is info@compu-home.com and our website, with our blog, is www.compu-home.com.



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About the *RPR* review community newspaper

Riverview Park Review is a non-profit community newspaper paid for solely by advertising. It is published five times a year. It is distributed free.

Submission formats

Contributions can be emailed to editor.riverviewrpr@gmail.com in **Microsoft Word** or **RTF**. Please *do not* format your documents.

**Deadline for submissions:
Before March 10, 2026.
Content submitted after the specified
deadline cannot be accepted**

Please note that the opinions published in *Riverview Park Review* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Riverview Park Review.

RPR review is currently seeking distributors.

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Photographs must be sent as attachments (not embedded in the email body) in **jpeg format** to editor.riverviewrpr@gmail.com. Photographs are to be accompanied with the **name of the photographer and a caption** describing the subject.

The word count of article submissions has been revised and limited to 750 words maximum. Material will have to be returned to the author to self-edit if a contribution is above this word count.

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Riverview Park Writing Contest Winner

Unsharpened Colouring Pencils: A Reliable Gift with Hidden Lessons

By Sonia Vani, a community volunteer, who still loves sharpening pencils

As a child growing up in the nineteen eighties, I had some predictable favourite toys: “My Little Pony”, “Care Bears”, and the easy-bake “Micro-Lite Oven”. Even “Sea-Monkeys” made the list for a short while. However, I soon realized that one would be hard-pressed to find a more deceptive marketing example than these “eager-to-please” sea creatures one could supposedly “train to perform tricks” outside a miniature, elusive, underwater castle. Alas, the small plastic aquarium that promised to be a lively ocean zoo quickly became an object of disillusionment.

Art supplies, however, never disappointed me. Specifically, colouring pencils. While these were as low-tech as a gift can be, it is precisely their simplicity that made them a reliable favourite.

One year, I was gifted with the

most incredible of sets: a Berol Prismacolor box of 48 pencils in red packaging, adorned with the brand name printed in a futuristic gold font. There were no “unboxing” videos then, but had there been, they might have captured the joy of breaking open this package and carefully sending the top lid back to prop the set up, revealing two inviting levels of chromatically ordered pencils.

This gift had a particularity which is rare these days: the pencils came unsharpened. This meant that the pleasure of receiving the gift had to be followed either immediately, or sometime thereafter, by a careful sharpening session. This provided plenty of time to muse about what I would eventually draw, once I had prepared and gotten acquainted with my tools.

Thankfully, my father owned a desk-mounted pencil sharpener. I remember retreating to the basement for what seemed like interminable sharpening bouts. I

would pinch together the sharpener’s little metal ears, open its gripping jaws, and trustingly insert each of my brand-new pencils.

I can still recall the way the sharpener’s metallic bite felt on the pencil as it pressed into its soft wooden core. I would turn the sharpener’s handle, carefully listening for the slightest difference in tone. This would signal that the optimal sharpening point had been reached—that if I persisted, the lead would break. Inevitably, no matter how careful I was, I would eventually have to disassemble the sharpener to either dislodge a broken tip or empty the multicoloured shavings filling its small canister. Yet, even this provided unexpected, multi-sensory satisfaction: the smell and the surprising beauty of the contrasting wood shavings, lined here and there with turquoise, yellow or green were, in themselves, pleasing vestiges of my efforts. Of course, all the while, my imagination busily anticipated the eventual release of

countless drawings, from lions to butterflies, from rainbows to ocean waves. And thus, it went 48 times over.

One might suggest that unsharpened pencils taught me delayed gratification, but this would be only half true. In reality, they also revealed that there is pride, even joy, to be found in preparatory work, as well as the sense of ownership and ease that comes from getting to know one’s creative tools and caring for them.

Sharpening pencils taught me that creativity is a process: often, ideas and inspiration form when—and where—we least expect them. I learned that art entails responsibility, and that it requires patience, planning, and effort. I am ever-grateful for these unexpected lessons and hope that children who unbox sharpened supplies may discover promise and fulfillment in other ways.

See details for April Writing Context on page 16.



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Si jamais je peux vous aider, n'hésitez pas à contacter mon bureau.

David McGuinty, MP | Député

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- **Chronic Back Pain:** For those who've been carrying the burden of back pain for what seems like forever, spinal decompression is a true game changer.
- **Degenerative Discs:** Decompression therapy gives those discs more breathing room and a break from the daily grind.
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New Year's Resolutions Made Real: Staying Active, Curious, and Connected

By Sherrilynn Starkie,
Special to Perley Health

It's a New Year, a time when many of us set intentions for the next 12 months: move more, stay socially connected, and try something new. Yet winter in Ottawa can make even the best resolutions hard to maintain with our short days and icy conditions. For many of Ottawa's older adults, the Active Seniors and Veterans Living Centre at Perley Health is proving to be a practical way to turn those resolutions into habits that last.

Getting more physical activity is one of the most popular New Year resolutions, and the Centre offers exercise programs to help you succeed including strength and balance classes, gentle cardio, and mobility sessions. Because classes are evidence-based and adapted for different abilities, Seniors can join at any starting point. And, group-based exercising adds motivation and accountability, two things that make resolutions easier to keep!

Another popular New Year's



Dianne Leclerc, a member of Active Seniors and Veterans Living Centre by Perley Health, enjoys a laugh during a recent exercise class, supported by Dana Lawless, Program Coordinator. PHOTO CREDIT: LAURA LILLY

goal is learning something new, and the Centre offers many opportunities to do just that. There are craft and hobby workshops giving Seniors a chance to develop new skills or revisit old interests. From creative arts and hands-on projects to guided workshops led by experienced facilitators, these sessions help keep your mind sharp and create opportunities for conversation and connection.

Make new friends

Social well-being is woven throughout the Centre's programming. There are group activities such as square dancing, wine tastings, humour workshops, memoir writing, and meditation sessions all on offer. For many participants, simply having a place to go each week, where they are known and welcomed, makes all the difference.

Veterans will also find pro-

gramming developed especially for them. In keeping with Perley Health's longstanding commitment to Canada's Veterans, the Centre offers a range of Veteran-focused activities and sessions that recognize shared experiences and foster connection among those who have served.

Affordable membership

Affordability supports participation as well. Thanks to funding from the Ontario Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility and the Perley Health Foundation, annual membership is only \$50 and many programs are offered at little or no cost, making it easier for Seniors and Veterans across the National Capital Region to participate regularly.

The Active Seniors and Veterans Living Centre reflects a simple truth about New Year's resolutions: they're more likely to succeed when they're supported by structure, community, and enjoyment.

The Active Seniors and Veterans Living Centre is open to anyone aged 55+. Learn more at perleyhealth.ca/asvlc.



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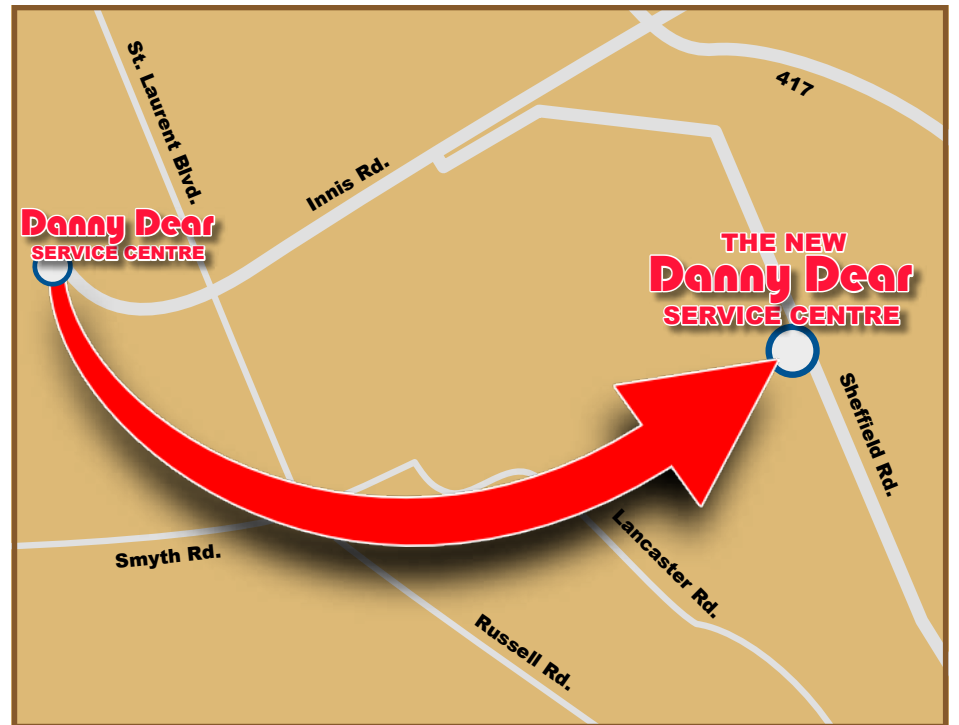
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TALKING MOVIES BY PETER THOMPSON OF MOVIES 'N STUFF

Crowing about February movies!

There's a lot to crow about on video this month! From the probable Best Picture winner, to a beautiful tale of family, all the way to an Emma Thompson suspense/thriller, these are the movies that I have to recommend and that should fill some of those February nights with entertainment, without flailing to always try to find something.

One Battle After Another

One of the true great movies of the year, *One Battle After Another* tells several tales, mostly focused on Bob (DiCaprio), a former revolutionary who now lives off the grid with his daughter Willa. When the Colonel responsible for disbanding his original gang resurfaces and kidnaps Willa, Bob must scramble to get her back. Full of relevant story lines seemingly ripped from today's headlines, this is a taut, tense and sometimes amusing roller coaster of a film that demands attention - and should be adding a Best Picture Oscar to its mantle soon. Amazing ensemble cast, includes: Leonardo DiCaprio, Sean Penn, Teyana Taylor, Benicio Del Toro and Chase Infiti.

Ghostlight

A beautiful and powerful drama about a construction worker who is growing apart from his wife and daughter until he finds a local theatre producing *Romeo & Juliet*. Finding a sense of purpose in the production, he begins to mend his relationship with his



One Battle After Another

daughter while they confront a personal loss. These are the kind of films that need trumpeting. Well acted, great story, small production, but huge impact. It's worth your time to seek it out!

Relay

A surprisingly solid drama/thriller about a "bribe broker" who facilitates deals between corrupt companies and their potential threats, however when a woman is in imminent danger, he goes back on his rule that he will never get personally involved and hides her, which leads to dire consequences. Well acted by Riz Ahmed, who was Oscar nominated for *The Sound of Metal*. Good stuff!

Ballad of Wallis Island

One of my favourite films of the year, *Ballad*, is a warm, at times

funny, at times poignant little gem filmed around the beautiful coastline and inland areas of Pembrokeshire, Wales. It tells the story of an eccentric lottery winner who wants to get his favourite band back together. Shockingly, the bandmates and former lovers accept his invitation to play a private show at his home on Wallis Island, which lead to some pretty interesting moments!

Eleanor the Great

Eleanor, a 94-year-old widow, moves to New York City after her best friend Bessie dies. Eleanor walks into a Holocaust survival support group and arbitrarily claims Bessie's experiences in the Holocaust for her own, leading to a tangled web of lies. When a journalist student hears of the story and wants to



Ghostlight

meet with Eleanor, she wonders just how far she can take this story. Really interesting moral dilemmas in this film - and a tender look at loss and loneliness brought to wonderful life by June Squibb of last year's *Thelma* fame. A solid watch.

Bugonia

Directed by Yorgos Lanthimos, who has brought other innovative titles to audiences, this one centers around Teddy (Jessie Plemons) and his brother, who are convinced Michelle Fuller (Emma Stone), a powerful pharmaceutical CEO, is an alien intent on destroying Earth. They abduct her, which leads to chaos as well as a wildly entertaining second half. Amazing performances by Stone and Plemons!

Weapons

It's not often a suspense/horror movie comes around that's worth noting, but this one absolutely is. It tells of a group of third grade students from a single class who go missing at the exact same time, on the exact same night and how everyone's suspicions are directed at their teacher (played well by Julia Garner). However, the real star of this film is Amy Madigan, who plays Aunt Gladys in a perfectly unsettling way. Mix that with the very creative non-linear way the story is told and you'll be entertained from the first frame to the last. Highly recommended!!

Dead of Winter

Emma Thompson in a suspense/thriller? Yes please. Thompson plays a widow who gets lost during a hike and comes across a cabin. Seeking refuge, she goes in and is in immediate mortal danger when she encounters a murderous couple holding a young woman hostage. An easy watch, a great performance and someone else getting cold - it's a win all around!

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MEG STICKL – Raised in Riverview Park and AIMing for the Future through Fitness

By Kris Nanda

Certified fitness trainer Meg Stickl, founder and CEO of AIM Fitness, is a familiar name to many Riverview Park federal retirees and Ottawa residents over 50, as well as aficionados of Rogers Cable Channel 22, which hosts her fitness programs. But did you know that Meg has long-ties to Riverview Park, starting from her childhood and continuing through today when she has local residents as clients?

Long time Riverview Park inhabitants may remember Meg as a little girl who grew up in Riverview Park on Dixie Street, the eldest of three children of Joe and Betty Stickl, who have lived there since 1980. Meg went to kindergarten at Riverview Elementary School and was then homeschooled and attended a private Christian school before going to Hillcrest High School.

Meg has fond memories of her childhood in Riverview Park, and says she loved the freedom to explore the neighbourhood. She spent many hours at Balena Park in the summers and winters, working at one point as a lifeguard at the Balena Pool while in high school. Meg delivered the Pennysaver newspaper as well as the Riverviews (precursor of the Riverview Park Review). The Stickl family also went camping every summer, and to this day Meg retains a love for the outdoors and nature.

After graduating from Hillcrest in 2005 (where she was on the field hockey team and volunteered at the Perley Veterans Centre), Meg took a year off to work and travel. During this gap year, Meg added leading aquafit classes to her repertoire as a swimming instructor. Meg also travelled in Europe and went down to New Orleans to volunteer with rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Katrina.

At the University of Ottawa, Meg majored in Psychology, and her Minor in Gerontology helped prepare her for her career working with those over 50. She explains that this interest started from the time she was 12, when a good friend's mother enlisted her daughter and Meg as volunteers at a long-term care facility, "to keep them out of trouble." Meg continued volunteering at the Perley while in high school, and during university she worked part-time leading fitness classes for seniors.

In 2010, after graduating from the U of O, Meg took a job working full time as a recreation manager at a retirement residence. She



Meg Stickl at a garage sale/lemonade stand with her brother Mark.



A very young, Meg Stickl, with her mom, skating at Balena Park.

also taught part time fitness classes at a seniors centre in Gloucester, where her enthusiasm for this "fun job" rubbed off, and more and more people began attending her classes.

Three years later, in 2013, Meg decided to strike out on her own and founded Activities in Motion (AIM) Fitness. She targeted those 50+ via a combination of personal in-home visits and group fitness classes in condos. Over the years, AIM Fitness has grown, hiring several other instructors and attracting clients in Ottawa and beyond, thanks to their on-line services. Meg and AIM conduct classes and have done presentations in churches as well as in seniors centres and residences (including Maplewood and Oakpark in Riverview Park).

The COVID lockdown presented a challenge, as Meg had to scramble and move AIM's focus away from in-person activities, adding her daily Fit Over 50 with Meg exercises segments on Rogers TV. Meg also launched an online fitness membership, AIM Fitness Online, with a video library of over 200 exercise videos.

A bright spot of the COVID era

was meeting and marrying her husband Mike, a teacher at Woodroffe High

School. Meg and Mike welcomed their son, baby Mason, in May 2025. As Meg transitions back to a busier training schedule, she has added a Moms and Baby fitness class which is held in a retirement home, where residents enjoy seeing the younger generation. As Meg notes, her "clienteles" now runs the full spectrum from infants to senior citizens. She feels this intergenerational interaction is mutually beneficial.

Although she no longer lives in Riverview Park, Meg frequently returns to the area to visit – adding that, "it's fun to go back to my old neighbourhood". Meg tells the story of going for a walk in Riverview Park with her family and her Bichon Frise, "Fit" Finley, when someone recognized the dog – who is usually sleeping in the background during Meg's exercise videos.

Meg now has 15+ years of experience working as a CanFitPro Certified Personal Trainer, Older Adult Specialized Land Instructor



Christmas 2025: Meg holding their pet, Finley, with her husband, Mike, and baby Mason.

SHARED BY THE STICKL FAMILY

and Aqua Fitness Instructor with WaterArt Fitness International. When she is not working or looking after Mason, Meg loves to cook new recipes, go for nature walks with her family (including Fit Finley), speak to seniors' groups about her love of fitness, and enjoy Oat Milk Chai Lattes.

When asked what she has learned through her work, Meg responds that "consistency has been important. Maintaining an exercise routine definitely yields results and improves balance. A regular exercise routine – just 20 minutes a day – will pay off, even if you don't see results right away." Meg adds that this advice about the importance of exercise and keeping in motion applies to all ages,

Meg urges people to keep moving and get out and walk (weather permitting of course). Who knows, you might even see Meg and her family (including Fit Finley) out for a stroll one day around Riverview Park!

TRINITY COMMUNITY GARDEN

Is it worth it? Absolutely!

by Rhonda Turner

While I sat New Year's Day looking out at the fresh blanket of white snow it reminded me of just how far away gardening season really is. Nine weeks until spring and another nine weeks until the usual planting date of May 24.

Now is the time I set up my indoor seedling table in a south-facing window. Past years I've used boards stretched over the backs of dining chairs, a wooden shelving unit and also a large board on top of an unused dog crate. None are ideal, but I used what I had and am not about to purchase some elaborate growing table or shelving. I just need space to place my warming mat, seedling trays, grow lights and at least 12 containers for the plants. Yogurt containers are the usual choice, however, I saw the use of clear milk bags rolled down and filled with soil. As the seedling grows the bag is rolled up and repetitively topped up with soil. This method looked promising and I may try it. Supposedly, it makes transplanting easier as you cut



Trinity taking a deep winter slumber. PHOTO: RHONDA TURNER

the bag and don't disrupt the root system.

I stick with tomato and pepper plants to germinate at home.

I plant pepper seeds early in January, which seems like an awfully long time in advance, but peppers do take a long time to germinate and grow into a decent sized plant that can be transplanted into the garden. For the tomato seedlings I wait at least until mid March or later, or they will grow too tall and get out of hand.

As the seedlings grow the wait is on to transplant them into the garden on the May long weekend or earlier, weather permitting.

You would think with all the effort and cost put into my gardening hobby it would be easier and much cheaper to just buy a six pack of seedlings or to go to a farmer's market and buy the finished produce. Maybe so. I have considered that, but I really do enjoy the social aspect at the garden, deciding what to plant, watering and weeding my plot, and do eventually enjoy going home after harvesting my well-deserved veggies.

Is it worth it? Yes, and I feel I am not alone with this feeling.

If you would like more information about Trinity Community Garden, please contact us at: trinitygarden480@gmail.com

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Native Plant Profile: Red Columbine

by Lynne Patenaude,
Friends of Riverview Park Green
Spaces (FoRPGS) and Ottawa South
Eco-action Network (OSEAN)

Another easy native perennial plant to add to your garden is red columbine, with the scientific name: *Aquilegia canadensis*. The genus name "Aquilegia" is from the Latin "aquila" for eagle, as the petals resemble an eagle's talons. It is also called wild columbine or Canada columbine, and in French, ancolie du Canada.

Red columbine is a cheerful plant that is native from Saskatchewan to PEI. Its pretty, divided leaves are a welcome sight in early spring, starting out a bit reddish as they emerge in mid-April, quickly becoming green as they grow. Its flowers are lovely, upside-down red cups, yellow in the centre, that usually bloom for 3-4 weeks starting in mid-May in Ottawa.

Red columbine is one of our few native flowers that is red, and the deep, tubular shape of its flowers make its nectar harder to access for some pollinators. It provides both nectar and pollen for bees and beetles in spring in the garden, before most other perennial plants are blooming. Larger queen bumblebees that come out in the spring have long enough proboscises (mouthparts) to reach the nectar. Some bees will "steal" nectar by making a hole, so they get nectar but don't help to pollinate the plant.

It is one of the most versatile of garden plants, growing well from full sun to full shade under mature trees. However, it is happiest in part shade, where you will find it in the wild, growing along the sunny edges of woodlands and on rocky slopes. It grows in soil conditions from dry to medium, and needs good drainage. It stays quite short, with low basal leaves and flower stalks between six and 18 inches (30-90 centimetres) tall. It will self-sow in your garden.

If you prefer to keep it in one spot, you can deadhead, or even better, harvest the seeds once the seedpods dry out and turn



Red Columbine. PHOTO: LYNNE PATENAUDE



brown, and share them with the Ottawa Wildflower Seed Library, where it is one of the most popular plants. Seeds left in the seed pods will also be eaten by finches. Small seedlings are easy to dig up and share. It can be short-lived though, so do leave some seedlings to mature.

Red columbine is an easy plant to grow, producing seed that is easy to harvest and germinates well. Like most native seeds, it needs to spend at least 60 days outside to break dormancy or in cold-moist conditions in the fridge. Seeds should be sown on the soil surface, as they need to

be exposed to light to germinate.

Red columbine evolves to flower in the spring just as Ontario's only pollinating birds, ruby-throated hummingbirds, are migrating north from their wintering grounds as far south as Panama. Hummingbirds will visit red columbine's tubular flowers to drink its nectar. Its leaves are one of the host plants for caterpillars of the columbine duskywing butterfly and for several moths.

Another co-evolved species, the columbine leafminer, is a tiny insect that tunnels through the leaves, making serpentine paths visible in summer. Red columbine is less affected by leafminers than ornamental columbine cultivars like "McKana mix". Leafminers won't damage the plant though, so you can leave them for beneficial insects like wasps that will control their populations as they gather up insects to feed their young. You can help attract wasps to your garden by planting native plants like Virginia mountain mint and spotted beebalm.

One thing to be aware of though, is the risk of hybridization between native red columbine and cultivated columbines, which come in many colours. If you want to plant red columbine in your garden, it's best to remove other columbines, or plant them as far apart as you can. This is one of the risks of gardening with introduced plants. Some introduced plants start to cross-breed with native plants through pollination, the resulting seeds are hybrid species and the genetics of the original native plant, often called the "straight species", may be lost.

The Friends of Riverview Park Green Spaces (FoRPGS) have planted red columbine in the community gardens along the Drake-Dorion path. We invite readers to kick-start your gardening season by joining other volunteers this winter, growing native plant seedlings under lights for FoRPGS community gardens and for OSEAN's Pollinator Patch kits! You can reach me at riverviewparkca@gmail.com & osean.info@gmail.com.

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ESSENTIAL HEALTH

Dry Needling and Acupuncture



**ANDREINA (NINA)
LUJAN-SIKORSKI**
RMT

You may have heard dry needling (intramuscular needling) and acupuncture used almost interchangeably. Since both involve very thin needles, it's easy to assume they are the same. While the tools look similar, the systems behind them, and how they are used, are quite different.

Different starting points: Acupuncture is part of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), a complete medical system over 2,000 years old. It is based on the idea that health depends on the smooth flow of energy, called Qi (pronounced "Chee"), through pathways called meridians. When this flow is blocked or unbalanced, pain or illness can occur.

Dry needling comes from a modern Western view of anatomy and pain science. It is commonly used in rehabilitation and manual therapy. Instead of meridians, it focuses on muscles, nerves, and connective tissue.

How are they different? The biggest difference lies in how points are chosen and what treatment aims to do.

In acupuncture, needles are placed along meridians to influence the body as a whole. A session may address pain, sleep, digestion, stress, headaches, or hormonal imbalances. The treatment is guided by a traditional diagnostic system that looks at patterns, not just isolated symptoms.

In dry needling, needles are placed directly into tight or painful muscles, often called trigger points. The goal is specific: release tension, reduce pain, and improve movement. The needle may be moved to create a brief "twitch response," helping reset muscle function.

The experience can also differ. Acupuncture is often gentle and relaxing, with needles left in place for 15-30 minutes while the body responds to their effect. Dry needling is more focused on painful areas, and resting time is usually not needed.



Acupuncture may suit chronic or widespread pain, migraines, stress, sleep or digestive concerns, and hormonal or menstrual issues. Some people use both at different times in life.

Different training and regulation: Acupuncturists complete specialized education in Traditional Chinese Medicine and must be licensed by provincial regulatory colleges in Canada.

Dry needling is performed by practitioners trained in anatomy and musculoskeletal care, such as physiotherapists, chiropractors, or registered massage therapists, depending on provincial regulations.

Which one is better? Neither is automatically better; it depends on the person and the problem.

Dry needling can be helpful for sports injuries, muscle strains, TMJ, neck, back or shoulder tension, and localized muscle pain.

Acupuncture may suit chronic or widespread pain, migraines, stress, sleep or digestive concerns, and hormonal or menstrual issues. Some people use both at different times in life.

Which one should you choose? If your main issue is a specific muscle that feels tight or painful, especially after injury or overuse, dry needling may be the most direct option.

If you have multiple symptoms or want a holistic approach that looks at your whole system, acupuncture may be a better fit.

The bottom line

Dry needling and acupuncture may use similar needles, but they come from different medical philosophies and serve different purposes. Knowing the difference helps you choose the care that best supports your health and your life.

A local perspective

In my practice as a registered massage therapist, I currently offer dry needling as part of massage therapy for muscle pain and movement issues. I am also training in acupuncture and plan to offer acupuncture treatments in 2027. My goal is to tailor care for what each person truly needs and help your body feel like home again.

If you have any questions about how massage therapy or physiotherapy might be able to help you, please email info@essential-health.ca.



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Dr. John Bell appointed to the Order of Canada



Dr. John Bell. PHOTO: JOHN_BELL_COPYRIGHT THEOTTAWAHOSPITAL

Shared by Communications and Public Relations, Ottawa Hospital Research Institute

Dr. John Bell, renowned cancer research scientist at The Ottawa Hospital and the University of Ottawa, has been appointed to the Order of Canada in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to cancer research, biotherapeutics and the health of Canadians.

For over three decades, Dr. Bell has been at the forefront of cancer biotherapeutics and immunotherapy, developing innovative treatments that use cells, genes and viruses to fight cancer and stimulate an anti-cancer immune response.

A hallmark of Dr. Bell's career has been his commitment to translating scientific discoveries into real-world therapies. He played a critical role in establishing The Ottawa Hospital's Biotherapeutics Manufacturing Centre, enabling researchers in Ottawa and across Canada to translate their discoveries into novel therapies and bring them to patients through clinical trials.

He also led the creation of Canada's first cancer immunotherapy

network, BioCanRx, which unites hundreds of scientists, clinicians, patients and partners to accelerate the development and delivery of life-saving treatments. Under his leadership, BioCanRx has enabled dozens of clinical trials of new therapies, directly benefiting Canadian patients and positioning Canada as a global leader in cancer research.

Among his many achievements, Dr. Bell spearheaded the development of several oncolytic (cancer-fighting) viruses, shepherding them into international clinical trials. He also collaborated with Dr. Natasha Kekre and others to develop the first made-in-Canada CAR-T therapy — a cutting-edge treatment that genetically engineers a patient's own immune cells to target their cancer. This innovation has provided new hope for patients who previously had no options and has established a national platform for advancing cellular immunotherapy.

Dr. Bell's leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic and his role in establishing the Canadian Pandemic Preparedness Hub (CP2H) and the Canadian Bio-manufacturing Cooperative have

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

New Year, New You!

The Active Seniors and Veterans Living Centre aims to serve all of the Ottawa and Eastern Ontario region, not just our residents. With support from the Perley Health Foundation, the Government of Ontario, and community partners, we offer a growing selection of affordable, accessible programming for all community members supporting engaged and purposeful aging.

Help keep your New Year's resolutions with programs designed to support well-being, independence, and social connection.

- **Fitness & recreation** classes to keep you moving.
- **Educational workshops** to challenge your mind and learn new skills.
- **Social activities** and peer groups to build friendships and community.
- **Veteran-specific programming** to honour and support our Veteran community.

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Active Seniors and Veterans Living Centre Contact:
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Seniors and Veterans
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Family Day is February 16th

Family Day this year is coming up on Monday, February 16th! I hope that you enjoy a fun filled day spent with family and friends enjoying the many winter activities our city has to offer.

Please note that several changes will apply to city services and schedules. There will be no curbside green bin, recycling, garbage or bulky item collection on Monday, February 16. Pick up will take place on Tuesday, February 17th with collection delayed by one day for the rest of the week.

A full list of scheduled Family Day changes can be found on the City's website.

Winter Fun Days in Ward 18!

2026 is off to an exciting start with many Winter Fun Days taking place throughout the ward this month! I hope to see you at these amazing events enjoying the snowy outdoors.

Heron Gate Winter Fun Day

Sunday, February 8th from 11a.m. to 1:30p.m.
 Sandalwood Park (2850 Sandalwood Drive)

Riverview Park Community Association Winter Carnival

Sunday, February 8th from 2p.m. to 4p.m.
 Balena Park (1640 Devon Street)

Hawthorne Meadows Family Day Winter Carnival

Monday, February 16th from 12p.m. to 3p.m.
 Hawthorne Park (2139 Tawney Road)

Solid Waste Services Printed Collection Calendar B Error

There was a printed Collection Calendar error on Schedule B for March 2026, but we've got you covered! Confirm your collection dates online: Ottawa.ca/CollectionCalendar.

You can even sign up for digital reminders, so you'll never miss collection day.

Perley Health Expansion - Feedback Opportunity

Perley Health's Board of Directors has approved the next step in the planning and design of a new on-site building that will provide long-term care for an additional 120 residents. Over the next few months, Perley Health will work through the required processes in preparation for provincial and municipal approvals. The current target start date for construction is late 2026 with occupancy planned for the end of 2028.

As they move through the next steps, Perley Health is engaging in open and transparent communication, including an online survey that can be found on the Perley Health website by choosing "Community of Care Expansion" from the "About" tab on the home page. The survey will remain open until early March. You can learn more about the expansion project and sign up for updates by visiting Perley Health's website.

Complete your Vacant Unit Tax Declaration Before March 19th

Homeowners are reminded to complete their Vacant Unit Tax (VUT) declaration for each residential property they own before the March 20 deadline. A \$250 late fee will be applied to declarations submitted after the deadline.

To complete the declaration, visit ottawa.ca/vut.


Stay Connected

Website: Please visit my website www.martycarrottawa.ca

I invite you to visit the site regularly for the latest news and events, community resources, and information about what's happening at Council and at the City of Ottawa.

Social Media: I invite you to follow me on my social media channels for frequent updates and more informal news and views:

 Facebook (Marty Carr - Alta Vista/Quartier Alta Vista)

 Instagram ([martycarrottawa](https://www.instagram.com/martycarrottawa))

110 Laurier West, Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1 | 613-580-2488
Marty.Carr@ottawa.ca | martycarrottawa.ca

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

further strengthened Canada's ability to respond to global health challenges.

As a co-founder of several bio-

tech companies, including Jennerex Biotherapeutics, Turnstone Biologics and Esphera SynBio, he also helped to create hundreds of jobs and attracted significant in-

ternational investment, further bolstering Canada's life sciences and biomanufacturing economy.

"I am deeply humbled to receive the Order of Canada," said

Dr. John Bell, senior scientist at The Ottawa Hospital and professor at the University of Ottawa. "This recognition is a testament not only to the power of scientific collaboration, but also to the resilience and hope of people with cancer and their families. I share this honour with the dedicated teams, trainees, and partners who have worked tirelessly to advance cancer research and improve lives across our country."

Dr. Bell has played a particularly important role in fostering The Ottawa Hospital's culture of translational research by bringing discovery scientists together with clinicians in multidisciplinary teams.

"Dr. Bell is not only a brilliant and creative researcher — he is also passionately dedicated to ensuring that promising therapies find their way to the Canadian patients who need them," said Dr. Rebecca Auer, Executive Vice-President, Research and Innovation at The Ottawa Hospital and CEO and Scientific Director of the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute. "His transformative vision continues to revolutionize how we translate innovative biotherapies to the clinic in this country and around the world."



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There is a lot to celebrate at the Riverpath

Shared by Jenny Monahan, Activities Manager, Riverpath Retirement Community

All programs and scheduled activities at the Riverpath are rooted in socialization. Whether it be a fitness class, an art class or our weekly wine and cheese. The calendar of events is designed to bring people

together, to have some fun and to get to know your neighbours.

We have some exciting plans coming up for the residents of the community. We have a large Francophone community here and so we will be celebrating the Quebec Carnival- complete with games and a sugar shack- inspired meal and a special performance by fiddler and

step dancer, Chad Wolfe. We're going to get people dancing and celebrating French culture together.

The 2026 Winter Olympics will be taking place in Milano Cortina in Northern Italy, starting in February, and we will be following our Canadian teams and rooting for Team Canada! Residents from the Riverpath will be joining other communities to compete in our own version of the Olympics by competing against other Riverstone homes.

Valentine's Day is just around the corner and to celebrate all things 'love' we are having a romantically- inspired dinner in our dining room, accompanied by live instrumental entertainment and guitarist, Andrew Mah, and violinist Nikki Buechler. Leading up to Valentine's Day, we are asking residents to submit a copy of their wedding photos and we're going to have a competition amongst the residents and staff to guess who the people in the black and white photos are.

Plenty more fun and engaging events are coming up in the next few months to get the residents out and having fun and socializing. There's no better way to beat the winter blues than by getting out and keeping active!



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Though They Be But Little, They Are Fierce!

By Kate Zito, Teacher,
Hillcrest High School Physical
Education Department

Although Hillcrest has one of the smallest high school populations in Ottawa, their athletics program has been taking the city by storm this fall!

Freshmen Eli Marks and Tyler Mitchell are great examples of the young and athletic prowess walking the halls of Hillcrest High School. Eli Marks, who is ranked 3rd in the country for tennis, nonchalantly stepped into the NCSSAA open division, the most competitive division in Ottawa, and claimed a gold medal. Tyler Mitchell, a promising, versatile athlete, made his Hillcrest Athletics debut in cross country, where he qualified for OFSAA, the provincial championships, and finished 60th among the 273 best runners in the province.

Tyler was also accompanied by two veteran Hillcrest athletes at OFSAA, grade 11 student Emily Munro and grade 12 student Charlie Mortimer. Emily is an accomplished runner, having



Eli Marks with his gold medal from the NCSSAA tennis tournament.

PHOTO BY DAVE THOMPSON

many OFSAA appearances under her belt over her high school career. Charlie Mortimer has been representing the Hillcrest Hawks in high honour since his arrival in grade 9, making both

the cross country and track and field OFSAA championships every year of his high school career. He crossed the finish line in an astounding 5th place, his best finish thus far at a provin-

cial competition.

“Being a Hillcrest athlete, it’s often hard to take on the tier 1 schools with three times as many kids. Nevertheless, we still manage to punch way above our weight, which is why I’m proud to represent my school through cross country and track on the provincial stage,” says Mortimer.

His incredible talent is being sought out by many Canadian and American universities. Charlie is also an Ontario Scholar and co-president at HHS. We are proud to have him represent the Hawks so passionately and with so much success!

The fall sports season success continues - the varsity girls basketball team took home the gold medal with their strong effort in the final against rival St Patrick’s High School. The junior boys’ soccer team earned a well-deserved silver medal against neighbouring school, Ridgemont High School, after a hard-fought season.

We are proud of our athletes and look forward to the upcoming winter and spring seasons to see what accomplishments are in store. GO HAWKS!

FRIENDS OF RIVERVIEW PARK GREEN SPACES (FoRPGS)

FoRPGS Note for February 2026

by Ron Ridley
on behalf of the FoRPGS

I hope you are getting out to enjoy the winter we are experiencing! Seems like we are finally getting a real winter with snow, cold temperatures (that stay cold) and all the sports and activities that go with these!

FoRPGS are pursuing new greenspaces work permits under the city’s new Community-led Greening Initiatives and Gardening Program. These permits allow us to continue our work at eradicating invasive species in our community, while working to restore the native plants. The City of Ottawa’s Community-led Greening Initiatives and Gardening Program is a new program that supports Ottawa residents who want to improve public spaces on City land through community-led gardening, ecological restoration, and other greening projects. The program provides equitable access to City land, technical guidance, and a consistent policy framework that supports both food-producing gardens and non-food greening initiatives. At this point, we are not pursuing the

“food” aspects of the program. In the past we have had “green spaces” permits to do work on Riverview Park city land through the Forestry department, but the city now wants all work to go through this permit process. While the application process is more work than before, the new permit will be good for 5 years versus before where we had to apply every year.

At a high level, and volunteer resources permitting, we are seeking permission to be able to work in the following areas: Cancer Survivor’s Park, Dale Park, Rail Line area, Hospital Link Rd., Riverview Park, the pathway south of Maplewood Retirement residence, the pathway between Dorion and Drake, Coronation Park (and Woods), the pathway on the north side of Coronation Avenue, the pathway between Chomley Cres. and Caverley, the pathway between Bathurst Ave. and Shelley, Balena Park, and Hutton Park.

Last issue, we reported that while researching the Coronation Woods, Lynne Patenaude had found out that the Coronation Woods had its Urban Natural Feature designation changed from being as EP-Environmental Pro-

tection, to being the same as the main part of the park - Recreation or REC, which could make it easier to be developed. The RPCA/FoRPGS investigated this, and after a lot of e-mails we were able to get our councillor to bring forth a motion changing the zoning back to Environmental Protection. The motion was accepted unanimously. Staff still need to make some amendments, but this is a positive step forward to protect the Coronation Woods forest.

On the Coronation Woods topic, the RPCA/FoRPGS has applied for a grant from the Invasives Species Centre to support our planned work to restore Coronation Woods in 2026. The grant would cover training, communications, consumables, tools, and supplies, which along with the tools and equipment the RPCA/FoRPGS has already should get us off to a good start.

As part of the RPCA’s 2026 social events, FoRPGS and the RPCA are excited to launch a Riverview Park Garden Tour. Community gardeners will have the opportunity to display their beautiful gardens and share their passion with others. Riverview

is home to many talented gardeners and stunning landscapes — please help spread the word! The tentative date for the garden tour is Saturday, June 20th. If you are interested in showcasing your garden next spring, please send in your contact information to secretaryriverviewparkca@gmail.com. More details to follow.

Get Involved — Volunteers Needed!

Students and youth looking to earn their forty volunteer hours, or anyone interested in making a difference: come join us! Whether you are curious about invasive species or eager to contribute, your involvement can make a real impact. Opportunities include:

- Caring for pollinator gardens
- Removing invasive species
- Maintaining forest pathways
- Participating in community planting projects

Stay Connected! Join our mailing list at FoRPGSOttawa@gmail.com or follow us on Facebook @FriendsOfRiverviewParkGreenSpaces. Together, we can keep Riverview’s green spaces vibrant, healthy, and welcoming for everyone.

HILLCREST HIGH SCHOOL

The secret beneath Hillcrest

by Anthony S, Grade 10
Hillcrest High School student

For decades students walked up the front steps of Hillcrest High School without knowing a secret lay hidden beneath them. Then, last year Hillcrest began a major construction project focused on making the school more accessible. These upgrades include an accessible front entrance, universal washrooms, and eventually an elevator. During this construction, workers uncovered a small metal box sealed inside the foundation stone. In this box was a time capsule placed there on June 28th, 1961 at exactly 2:30 pm by the then principal, B.L. Bradley. After sixty-four years buried in stone, it has finally been discovered and unearthed.

The moment the capsule was opened, it became clear that the box wasn't just full of old objects, but it was the year 1961 frozen in time. It contained newspapers, photos, notes, but most importantly, endless memories and stories about our school and our community.

The 1960's newspapers were some of the more intriguing



Contents of the time capsule discovered in Hillcrest's foundation stone. PHOTO: MELANIE REEKS.

items. They were yellowed at the edges and bursting full of extremely interesting facts and details. The Cold War was mentioned a few times and headlines about the Cuban Missile Crisis, tensions with the Soviet Union and lots of anxiety about a nuclear war. Some of the ads absolutely shocked students, given how much cheaper things were back then- twenty-five cents for a haircut?! Yearly subscriptions for the price of two dollars?! You could've taken your whole family on a five-day trip to New York with trans-

portation, a hotel, sightseeing and a baseball game, all included, for only \$46.50!

Bradley left many photos and information about himself and his family. There were old pictures of his children, grandchildren and even a picture of his house (which still exists and is in the same condition!). There is a certificate and ceremony program from the day when the foundation stone was first laid, a list of Hillcrest's first staff members, one of every single Canadian coin in circulation during the 60s, along with stamps,

and a gold medal belonging to Dr. George Kennedy, a University of Toronto Graduate that was donated to the school.

"We were very excited to discover the contents of the capsule during our recent construction," said Dinu Chande, Hillcrest's current principal. "The artifacts not only provide a fascinating glimpse into the world of 1961, but also serve as a great reminder of the important role Hillcrest has played in this community for so many years. We are currently exploring a way to display the contents so that members of our community can enjoy and learn from them."

Even after unfolding the newspapers, studying the notes and pictures, there is still so much to discover and it feels like we've only scratched the surface of what this time capsule can really tell us. Why was it that these items were chosen? How long was this box expected to stay hidden? The more we uncover, the more we realize how much is still waiting to be explored. One can only wonder how students would react in 2090 if we left them a time capsule from today?

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Riverview Park Review

SECTION TWO

FEBRUARY 2026

A Voice of Riverview Park

MARCH 2026

Matthew House update February 2026

Shared by Kailee Brennan

In Case You Missed It! Matthew House Ottawa is expanding its Furniture Bank and will be opening a brand-new location at 700 Industrial Avenue in early February. Renovations are already underway, and we're so excited to be bringing this beautiful new community space to the neighbourhood.

In 2025 alone, our Furniture Bank fully furnished 1,599 homes through donated furniture items, helping families transition out of homelessness, newcomers settle into permanent housing, and people rebuild after crisis – all while keeping thousands of gently used furniture and household items out of landfill. Many neighbours may already know Matthew House for our refugee reception homes across Ottawa, where we provide safe housing and settlement support to people seeking protection in Canada. The Furniture Bank is a growing part of this work, helping families turn housing into a true home.



As we prepare to open, we are actively recruiting volunteers for a variety of roles, including furniture sorting and staging, small-item organizing, client support, warehouse flow, and deliveries. We will be hosting a volunteer orientation at 700 Industrial on Saturday, February 7 at 10:00 am. To register, please visit www.matthewhouseottawa.org/volunteer and fill out our volunteer application form.

If you'd also like to support the final renovations and fit-up of the warehouse, contributions to our capital campaign are warmly welcomed at www.matthewhouseottawa.org/capital-campaign. We look for-



The wonderful progress at Matthew House.

ward to becoming part of the Riverview Park community and sharing this exciting new chapter with our neighbours!



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The Riverview Park Community Association (RPCA) Carol Sing in pictures

What a beautiful event



Priscilla and Kira tried out the Number 1 Home Services tractor.
PHOTO: FRANCE DULUDE



The guests at the Carol Sing welcomed members of the choir of École secondaire Franco Cité.
PHOTO: FRANCE DULUDE



Benny, Sofia and Alora were among the over 100 guests on December 12. PHOTO: FRANCE DULUDE



The John Fraser Team provided the delicious hot chocolate.
PHOTO: CAROLE MOULT



Welcoming donations for the Blair Court Community Food Bank were: (L-R) Mary (staff), Anna (volunteer), Kristy (staff) and Tim (volunteer). PHOTO: CAROLE MOULT



From Volunteer Ottawa, Sean and Ashley with Dianne, were great helpers once again.
PHOTO: CAROLE MOULT

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The Harding Family



Councillor Marty Carr sponsored the horse-drawn sleigh ride. Dan and Jason were the beautiful Belgian horses pulling the wagon.
PHOTO: JANE GIBSON



Teaghan, Mireille and Zara checked out the games.
PHOTO: FRANCE DULUDE



Ewan, Lochlan, Vanessa and Brandon were all bundled up for the cold evening Carol Sing.
PHOTO: FRANCE DULUDE



Micaela and Harleigh enjoyed joining in the Friday evening event. PHOTO: FRANCE DULUDE

2025 the year that was



The Great Balena Corn Roast: Mayor Mark Sutcliffe with Ward 18 Councillor Marty Carr.

PHOTO: CAROLE MOULT



Isaiah of Number 1 Home Services joined the RPCA Carol Sing for the first time.

PHOTO: CAROLE MOULT



Legolas (Gus), the 2025 RPCA Pet Contest Cat Winner

PHOTO: EVE MCGURRIN



Two elections in the snow.

PHOTO: CAROLE MOULT



The RPCA Winter Carnival: 2025. PHOTO: CAROL MCQUEEN



A table of friends at the RPCA Fall Social: (Front row L-R) Kate Connolly, Ishtar Luesby, Carole-Anne Parsneau-Mill, (Back row) Jen Blattman and Jen Howes. PHOTO: ANNA NITOSLAWSKA



Riverview's last party line

PHOTO: CAROLE MOULT



The Amazing Easter Egg Hunt.

PHOTO: FRANCE DULUDE



Keith McKelvey sold hotdogs and hamburgers during Porchfest. The money raised went to the Blair Court Community Food Bank.

PHOTO: CAROLE MOULT



"Heart of the Riverview Trail".

PHOTO: GREG MONEY

Hillcrest Drama presents...

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By Laramie Dean
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THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE



KRIS NANDA
Chair, RPCA Planning & Development Committee

The Riverview Park Community Association (RPCA) tracks and advocates for the community on planning and development matters in and around the local community, and elsewhere around Ottawa. The RPCA supports initiatives that enhance active transportation in Riverview Park and elsewhere, including filling in gaps in pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure and improved winter maintenance of sidewalks and pathways.

Potential Residential Housing Project at 1867 Alta Vista Drive

A new development has recently been proposed at 1867 Alta Vista Drive (a currently blank parcel between the Canadian Dental Association and Nova Network building and across the street from the Canadian Blood Services headquarters and MD Financial offices). The proposal consists of 445 units in two 9 storey buildings. A zoning amendment will be required to change the zoning from institutional to residential. If constructed, these units potentially provide needed housing for medical interns and workers at the General Hospital complex who would be able to walk to work rather than take public transit or drive. More details are available on the City's Dev Apps website and an information session will be organized by Councillor Carr's office.

Coronation Avenue Developments

The Ottawa Community Land Trust (OCLT) is acquiring a 30+ unit rental apartment building (700 Coronation Avenue) in early 2026 to protect affordable rents for current and future tenants. In addition, the City has approved severance of the parcel at 700 Coronation to allow construction of a ten-unit, low-rise, apartment building and seven parking spaces adjacent to the existing building.

Potential Conversion of Coronation Woods Greenspace

The RPCA is closely monitoring threats to greenspace in the community, particularly the Coronation Woods east of Station Boulevard (and adjacent to the existing play structures and basketball

courts). This parcel is now slated to be rezoned to Recreational and as a result, these woods (or part of them) and valuable wildlife habitat could end up being lost during a conversion process.

Concerns have been raised about a lack of transparency during this rezoning process. Local residents and groups (including the RPCA) were concerned that the City was using the Official Plan and Zoning By-law processes to simply remove the designation of areas that have been Urban Natural Features for almost 20 years through an administrative process and without public consultation or explanation. The RPCA Board has been in contact with Councillor Carr on this issue. The Councillor put forward a motion to retain Environmental Protection zoning that passed at the Planning Committee meeting on December 17. It was scheduled for consideration by full Council as part of a vote on the Zoning Bylaw at its January 28 council meeting.

ALTO – High Speed Rail Consultations

ALTO the federal crown corporation in charge of building the Toronto-Québec City High-Speed Rail Network, is currently consulting with the public in various communities along the planned corridor, including Ottawa. Public consultations were held in Ottawa on January 21-22, 2026. The ALTO team is also accepting comments until March 28, 2026 via virtual info sessions and a virtual platform. Additional information can be found at <https://www.altotrain.ca/en/stay-updated>

Of particular interest to Riverview Park residents and other stakeholders are the proposed route and track alignment which have yet to be confirmed. Possibilities include using the federally-owned parcel north of Tremblay and west of St. Laurent which had previously been set-aside for a now-cancelled commercial and residential project. The consultation will also provide an opportunity for input regarding the improving active transportation connectivity across (above or below) the VIA Tracks which is on

hold, pending the high-speed rail project development process

Traffic Safety Issues/ Pedestrian Safety

Safety and Traffic Concerns in front of Riverview Alternative School (RAS) Local residents have raised concerns about illegal parking along Knox Crescent during drop-off and pick up from RAS, instead of parking a block away and walking their children to school. These concerns have been reported to 311 and Bylaw officers.

The RPCA is asking the school and the City to consider putting in painted crosswalks across Knox Crescent where it intersects with the sidewalks on Dorion and Drake near the school, as this measure plus better signage might encourage parents to feel safer walking their children. These measures would also help to calm traffic and make it safer for seniors and parents with young children to cross Knox.

In other local developments related to cycling and pedestrian safety:

—Dorion Avenue from Knox Crescent to Neighbourhood Way sidewalk renewal is tentatively planned to take place over the next 1-2-years. The project scope will be to reconstruct a 1.8-metre-wide concrete sidewalk.

—the City has been clearing snow from the portion of the municipally owned path between Maplesoft Centre/Parking lot and the intersection of Industrial and Riverside (after many years of RPCA lobbying).

—There are no plans for a direct Multi Use Path (MUP) connection between Dale Park and Cancer Survivor's Park at this time. However, the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) includes a project to construct a pathway to connect Dale Park down to the sidewalk on Riverside Dr, which will improve connectivity options between the two parks. This pathway is part of the later phase of TMP projects and is not expected to be implemented until after 2033.

A new Active Transportation Roundtable for the Ward, being hosted by Councillor Carr's Office, held its first meeting on December 1. Riverview Park residents took part in the Roundtable, to help identify locations where improvements are needed for cycling and pedestrian safety. A second meeting is tentatively scheduled for March 2026.

New Matthew House Warehouse at 700 Industrial Avenue. Matthew House Ottawa is

a community-based charity that supports refugee claimants and furnishes homes for families in need through its Furniture Bank. In 2025, the organization signed a lease at 700 Industrial Avenue and is expanding its Furniture Bank into a nearly 20,000 sq. ft. facility. The new space includes multiple loading bays, a workshop for repairing and building furniture, a sorting area for household items, and a welcoming reception and waiting area. The renovated facility is expected to open in February 2026.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS OC Transpo Parking Garage at Belfast and St. Laurent Blvd. (1500 St. Laurent)

A new 6970 square-meter enclosed parking garage is planned on what is currently a large surface parking lot. The facility will support the conversion of a large portion of OC Transpo's bus fleet to electric. Approximately 450 of the existing diesel buses are scheduled to transition to a full battery electric bus (BEB) fleet by 2027. The comment period closed on September 2. No timeline has yet been announced for construction.

On November 12, 2025, Canada Lands Company, on behalf of Build Canada Homes, officially launched a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), to engage **potential builders for creation of 1,100 new housing units at 1495 Heron Road (the former Federal Study Centre)**. The parcel spans 7.3 hectares (18 acres) and is zoned for medium-density, multi-family buildings. Construction is anticipated to start in late 2026 and will be a housing mix of 40% affordable rental and 60% market rental.

Perley Health Expansion.

Perley Health's Board of Directors has approved planning and design of a new on-site building to provide long-term care for an additional 120 residents. Over the next few months, Perley Health will work through the required processes in preparation for provincial and municipal approvals. As part of this process, Perley Health is conducting an online survey that will remain open until early March.

Potential Housing Complex at 1460 Riverside Drive.

In 2025, the National Capital Commission (NCC), in collaboration with the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, publicly

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

RIVERVIEW PARK PRESIDENT'S REPORT



RON RIDLEY
RPCA President

I hope your New Year has gotten off to a great start! This full-on winter weather is certainly making all winter activities feasible. It is great to see the canal open early as well, and while there have been some warm days, it is getting a lot of use. We are also fortunate to have the Rideau Winter Trail bordering our community – highly recommended if you like cross country skiing. The Ornament path is back again this year with decorations since December 1st and is seeing a lot of use.

The RPCA has been active since our last update with our Annual Christmas Carol Sing. The event was well attended with over 120 people – even with the cooler temperature. New this year was the addition of the Franco Cite Choir! Twelve students and their leader came out and sang French Christmas songs beautifully. Craig Cormier and Damiano Conte then lead the group in Christmas



Carols – very well done as always! Again, this year we were fortunate to have our Councillor Marty Carr sponsor a horse-drawn sleigh ride for our event. Those massive Belgian horses are an impressive sight to see up close! The SMOREs were also extremely popular. Special thanks also to Councillor Carr, MPP John Fraser, MP David McGuinty, Southeast City Church, and Number 1 Home Care for their support of our event.

The RPCA Social Committee is bringing out a new event in February (weather permitting), called the “Hike & Howl”! It was all set-up for Saturday, January 10th to coincide with the Wolf Full Moon in January, adding in a hike along the Ornament trail under moonlight. However, the weather did not cooperate, cre-

Stay up to date by subscribing to our monthly newsletter or becoming an RPCA member for only \$20 a year.

ating treacherous conditions. We are looking to re-schedule for the February Snow Moon, but will keep the howl part as it will be fun – stay tuned for the planned date.

Our very popular annual Winter Carnival is scheduled for Sunday, February 8th this year. It will be difficult to top having the honourable Mark Carney in attendance last year (before he was elected Liberal Leader and then Prime Minister) but I am confident it will be a wonderful time in any event. There will be games for the children, including the always popular “Shoot-to-Win,” a campfire, SMOREs, the rink and lots of music. As a new addition, we are trying to borrow outdoor winter sports equipment from the Ottawa Outdoor Gear Library to give residents an opportunity at

trying something new. Always an enjoyable time to get out and see your neighbours, while celebrating winter activities.

Help wanted! The RPCA is looking for someone in the community to work with Kris Nanda on Planning and Development issues who could eventually take over as Planning and Development lead. This role requires following the planning and development activities in the community and city and reporting on them. There are resources to mentor anyone interested.

Additionally, if you would like to get involved with the RPCA Board, we do have some openings for Directors-At-Large. We look for people passionate about making a difference!

Stay up to date by subscribing to our monthly newsletter or becoming an RPCA member for only \$20 a year. Ready to make a difference? Visit www.riverviewparkca.com or email us at president@riverviewparkca.com with your ideas or questions. We would love to see you at our next board meeting—details are on our website. Together, we can build a stronger, more vibrant Riverview Park. We look forward to seeing you at an event or around the neighborhood!

Planning and Development update

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

announced it was seeking a proponent to construct residential housing at 1460 Riverside Drive (the empty lot directly across from the Cancer Survivors Park). No further details are available.

Converting former bus only right-hand turn lane at Industrial/Riverside.

Earlier this year, the RPCA requested that this lane (restricted to buses only during LRT construction) be converted to regular traffic or a dedicated right turn onto Tremblay and Eastbound onto HWY 417 only. In response, City Traffic Operations will be revising the lane configurations in spring 2026 to remove the bus lane and reinstate the curb lane as a travel lane for general traffic. Due to the early arrival of winter weather in November, the road paint cannot be modified at this time to reflect the revised traffic pattern.

The RPCA has yet to hear back from a request of officials about the potential impact of the Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) planned changes for ele-

mentary schools in the Riverview Park area (including reports that the RAS will not have kindergarten classes in the fall of 2026).

The Village of Riverbank Terrace | Schlegel Villages is notionally scheduled to open in fall 2026. In the meantime, the Multi-Use Path behind this complex is expected to be closed for most of the year while construction continues.

Information on some project proposals can be found at the City of Ottawa website at: <https://devapps.ottawa.ca/en/> The RPCA welcomes your input on these proposals and any other potential developments in the area.

If you are interested in joining the RPCA P&D group or would like further information, or have a planning and development concern, you may contact the Committee Chair, Kris Nanda via Communications@RiverviewParkCa.com. For more information on this and other activities in Riverview Park, please see the RPCA website at www.riverviewparkca.com or email the RPCA at riverviewparkca@gmail.com

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Holiday cheer brings joy to Oakpark residents and staff

Shared by Bonnie Miller, Marketing Manager, Oakpark Retirement Residence

The Holiday Season at Oakpark Retirement Community was filled with Joy, Generosity, and Meaningful Moments that truly reflected the spirit of the season.

The excitement is to be continued at Oakpark in the months ahead. On Feb 6, we will proudly host the Opening Ceremony of our Winter Olympic Challenge,

where our residents will compete in friendly games against our sister community, Maplewood. On Feb 13, we invite one and all to our Valentine Friendship Social; a heart-warming event raising funds for the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

At Oakpark Retirement Community, creating moments of connection, compassion and celebration is at the heart of everything we do - and we look forward to many more joyful gatherings in the year ahead.



Earlier in December, we had planned a Resident and Family Christmas Party, which unfortunately had to be postponed due to a flu outbreak. While disappointing at the time, we were grateful to safely come together to host a Special New Year's Eve Celebration instead. The event featured live entertainment, champagne, festive treats, and plenty of laughter - a joyful way to welcome in the New Year and celebrate together as a community.



On December 18th, our Mascot, Rudy went to all the Riverstone Communities to pick up the cash donations and the non-perishable items as part of the Riverstone Fundraiser for the Ottawa Food Bank. More than \$11,000 in cash from residents, families, staff and Management was raised by all the Communities as well as many, many boxes of food items.



We were also honoured to partner with Darling Solutions, who generously donated two special gifts for residents who do not have nearby family and often spend the holidays alone. These two residents were thoughtfully chosen, and Santa and the Management team personally delivered the gifts.

YOUR LOCAL BREWERY AND TAPROOM

11-830 INDUSTRIAL AVE.
VIMYBREWING.CA



Just before Christmas, our residents were delighted with a surprise visit from Santa himself, played by our Environmental Services Manager, Dave, along with his cheerful helpers, made up of Oakpark's management team. Each resident received a thoughtfully-prepared box of festive goodies, lovingly put together by Meenaal, our Food Service Manager. The surprise was met with heartfelt appreciation, smiles and many a warm 'thank-you' from residents who were genuinely touched by the kindness and care behind the gesture.

DEAR FRAN

Where to Find Reliable Gardening Information in Ottawa



**FRAN
DENNETT**

Begin your search with local horticultural societies, local garden clubs, Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton, local nurseries with trained staff, reputable internet sites, such as, botanical gardens, horticultural colleges, seed houses, and lastly a good gardening book or Canadian gardening magazine.

Why join a horticultural society?

- Most members have been gardening in their area for a long time and are eager to share their experiences.
- Yearly plant sales and swaps are a source of plants and the money raised goes toward projects, scholarships and the education of members.
- Horticultural experts speak on topics from flower arranging to xeriscaping at the monthly meetings.
- Some societies have junior programs or offer juniors workshops at their plant sale.
- Best of all you meet like-minded people with a passion for growing things.
- Hospitality and camaraderie at horticultural meetings are outstanding.
- A single membership is in the \$25 range and great value for your money.

Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA)

<http://www.gardenontario.org>



Founded in 1906 the OHA has led Ontarians in all things horticultural. There are 260 local societies (26,000 members) registered under the Ontario Agricultural and Horticultural Societies Act. In Ottawa, there are several Horticultural Societies: Almonte, Gloucester, Kanata-March, Nepean, Ottawa, Ottawa Valley Rock Garden, Manotick, Russell, Stittsville, and West Carleton.

Gardeners may join as many societies as they wish as long as they pay their membership fees. The entire OHA is volunteer run.

Gloucester Horticultural Society (GHS)

<https://gardenontario.org/society-listing/entry/93>

facebook.com/GloucesterHorticulturalSociety/
youtube.com/@gloucesterhorticulturalsociety

As a member since 1981 and twice President of the GHS, I have experienced all the benefits listed above. The people I have met, and the gardening knowledge I have gleaned from them has been stellar.



Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton (MGOC)

<http://www.mgottawa.ca>



The Master Gardener concept of training volunteers to give sound advice to home gardeners, started in Washington State in 1972. In 1985, the Ontario Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA) introduced the program in Ontario and in 1986 in Ottawa.

Over the last forty years MGOC has grown from a group of about 25 volunteers to over sixty. On the MGOC website you can learn how to become a master gardener, book speakers, read gardening articles, and find out where MGOC will be in 2026 (e.g. home show, farmers markets).

Since 1998 MGOC has been partnering with the Friends of the Farm to offer a lecture series. Register at <https://friendsofthefarm.ca/> This year's series focuses on growing food.

TROWEL TALK, is the MGOC free monthly electronic gardening newsletter. For past issues and to subscribe visit mgottawa.ca/trowel-talk-newsletter-subscription. Master Gardeners will answer your questions directly either by email at gardeningsanswers@mgottawa.ca or in their facebook group facebook.com/groups/819730788084134.

Ottawa Public Library

<https://bibliooottawalibrary.ca>

Occasionally has free gardening lectures. Check their website.



There are also many websites that focus on Canadian and Ontario gardening, here are only a few of my favourites:

Birds Canada birdgardens.ca

Call of the Forest calloftheforest.ca/plant-a-tree

Canada's Plant Hardiness site planthardiness.gc.ca

Canadian Wildlife Federation Plant Encyclopedia
cwf-fcf.org/en/resources/encyclopedias/native-plant-encyclopedia/

GardeningCalendar.ca gardeningcalendar.ca

Ottawa Wildflowers ontariowildflowers.com

Society for Organic Urban Land organiciandcare.ca

Ottawa Wildflower Seed Library

<https://wildflowerseedlibrary.ca>



The OWSL is a volunteer run organization that shares seed and plants native to Ontario for free. You can contribute by collecting seeds at the end of the season to give to the library to share with other people. In 2024-2025 over 100,000 packages from 265 different species were given away.

Subscribe to their monthly newsletter, **The Bloom and Buzz** at bloomandbuzz.substack.com.

Seeds of Diversity

<https://www.seeds.ca/>



Seeds of Diversity is dedicated to search out, preserve, perpetuate, study, and encourage the cultivation of heirloom and endangered varieties of food crops.

Ottawa's 2026 Seedy Saturday is on **Saturday March 7th, from 10 to 3**, at Emmanuel United Church, 691 Smyth Road. The seed exchange table is very popular.

Just Food

<http://justfood.ca/>



Just Food is an Ottawa based grass roots organization that envisions vibrant, just and sustainable food and farming systems in the Ottawa region. Their website has information about local community gardens and other food growing initiatives.

The Fletcher Wildlife Garden (FWG),

<https://ofnc.ca/programs/fletcher-wildlife-garden>



The FWG is tended by volunteers as a project of the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club and is an example of how to create wildlife friendly habitat and gardens on urban and rural property using native plants of the Ottawa region. There are many different types of habitats, e.g. an old wood lot, amphibian pond, evergreen woods, a hedgerow, butterfly meadow and a more formal backyard garden.

The FWG's online plant sale is in June.

Local nurseries hire staff, to work and answer customers' questions. Do yourself and these people a favour, come prepared with name (botanical) of the plant you are seeking, a picture and any other information that helps them find what you are looking for. Many stores are selling more locally grown and native plants. Always ask where a store sources their plants.

To view over 80 eastern Ontario nurseries listed on an interactive Google map, scan in the following QR



I hope you find this information useful.

TAKE A LOOK... EXPLORE LIFE AT MAPLEWOOD

Upcoming Maplewood Highlights for: February/March/April

FEBRUARY

Live Entertainment

Tuesday February 3rd from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Maplewood Chili

OFFSITE: Riverview Park Community Winter Carnival

Sunday February 8th from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Wine and Cheese

Friday February 13th from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Mardi Gras Social

Tuesday February 17th from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Chinese New Year Dinner Year of the Fire Horse

Friday February 20th from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.



MARCH

Classical Piano Concert Evening

Friday March 13th from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Waffle Wednesday

Wednesday March 25th from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Art Class / Afternoon Painting

Tuesday March 31st from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

APRIL

Volunteer Appreciation Cocktail Party

Thursday April 23rd from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Open House

Saturday April 25th from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Call Brian today to book a personal visit! 613-656-0556 Ext. 701

These photos tell a little about winter events at Maplewood

Shared by Raquel Leguizamon, Activity Manager, Maplewood Retirement Community



Above and Below: Ugly Sweater Breakfast



New Year's Eve



Winter Indoor Walking Club



Knitting Club

Advertisement for Super Duper Pizza, including logo, hours (Monday to Saturday 11:00 am to 10:00 pm, Sunday Closed), phone number (613-523-0000), website (www.superduperpizza.com), and logos for Doordash, Skip the Dishes, and Uber Eats.

Advertisement for Rock's Barber Shop, featuring a barber pole image, the text 'Rock's Barber Shop', 'We are OPEN', address (1579 Alta Vista Drive, Alta Vista Centre), owner information (Rock Lalonde), and phone number ((819) 635-3711).



South East Asia

by Peter C



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2



3



4



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6

PHOTO 1: The Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, Cambodia
PHOTO 2: The UNESCO World Heritage site of "Angkor Wat" in Cambodia.
PHOTO 3: The sacred temple of "Ta Prohm" in Cambodia where the movie "Tomb Raider" was filmed.
PHOTO 4: On a Sampan travelling back to the ship on the Mekong River, Vietnam
PHOTO 5: Independence Palace, formerly the South Vietnamese Presidential Place in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
PHOTO 6: Vipassan Dhurak Buddhist Centre of Kingdom of Cambodia.
PHOTO 7: A tasty treat of fried crickets, grasshoppers and tarantulas.
PHOTO 8: Crossing the River on a Monkey Bridge on My An Hung Island, Vietnam
PHOTO 9: The "Banteay Srei Temple" in Cambodia.



7



8

For the travel column, we are encouraging our RPR readers to submit their travel photos, stories, share adventures and provide useful travel tips. Submissions should not exceed 600 words, with a limit of five photos if you are including text. The next deadline is Saturday, March 14, 2026. No exceptions, please.



9

ALTA VISTA AND ELMVALE ACRES PUBLIC LIBRARIES

ALTA VISTA AND ELMVALE ACRES LIBRARIES – FEBRUARY/MARCH 2026

For the most current updates as well as information about available services, please visit www.biblioottawalibrary.ca or call 613-580-2940.

The Library's hours are:

- Monday to Thursday: 10 AM to 8:30 PM
- Friday: 1 PM to 6 PM.
- Saturday: 10 AM to 5 PM

HOLIDAY HOURS

CLOSED Monday, February 16th for Family Day.

Please note the following when visiting:

- You can place holds online at www.biblioottawalibrary.ca or by calling InfoService at 613-580-2940.
- Public computer use is limited to two hours per user per day. To reserve a computer ahead of time, reservations can be made either at the branch or online from home.
- Meeting and program rooms are now available for booking.
- Please visit our website for the most up-to-date information with regards to programming.
- Outdoor book drops are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Museum passes are available on a first come, first-serve basis. Please contact the museum in question before you visit to inquire about hours, closures, protocol etc.

Please visit www.biblioottawalibrary.ca for the most up-to-date information.

Info Service is available for many inquiries and services by calling 613-580-2940 or emailing: infoservice@biblioottawalibrary.ca

■ FRIENDS OF THE OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY BOOK SALE

The Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Book Sale is on at the Alta Vista Branch. Books, music CDs and DVD movies are available for children, teens, and adults in both English and French. Prices are as follows:

- Children's Books - \$1.00.
 - Adult and Teen Mass Market Paperbacks - \$1.00
 - Adult and Teen Soft Cover Books - \$2.00
 - Adult and Teen Hard Cover Books - \$3.00
 - CDs and DVDs - \$2.00 per disc.
- The price of certain items may be different than shown here. Prices are subject to change.

BOARD GAME AND PUZZLE SWAP: The Alta Vista Branch hosts a small, self-serve board game and puzzle swap, located on the shelves next to the washrooms on the main floor. Bring in a complete board game or puzzle and trade it in for one that is "new to you." Please make sure that any games or puzzles, that are brought in, are complete with no pieces missing.

■ CHILDRENS PROGRAMMING

March Break

March Break programming will be available on the website by February 2nd. Registration begins on Monday, February 9th. This year's theme is Curious Creatures, March 16th to 21st.

Family Storytime

Stories, rhymes, and songs for children of all ages and their parents or caregivers. Bilingual. Drop-in program. Wednesdays at 10:30 AM until March 4th. 30 minutes.

Babytime

Stories, rhymes, and songs for children of all ages and their parents or caregivers. Bilingual. Drop-in program. (ALTA VISTA BRANCH) Thursdays at 10:30 AM until March 5th. 30 minutes (ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH) Tuesdays at 10:30 AM until February 25th. 30 minutes.

Contes en Famille (SUCCURSALE ALTA VISTA BRANCH) C'est l'heure du conte! Histoires, comptines et chansons pour les enfants de tous âges et un parent ou gardien. Inscription non requise. Les samedis à 10h30. 30 minutes.

Read-A-Loud Circle

(SUCCURSALE ALTA VISTA BRANCH) A one-hour long read-a-loud circle where we will take turns reading, sharing thoughts and opinions, and defining new vocabulary. Bilingual. Drop-in program. Tuesdays at 4 PM until March 3rd. Ages 7 to 12. 60 minutes.

Cercle de Lecture en français (SUCCURSALE ALTA VISTA BRANCH)

Rejoignez notre programme hebdomadaire de cercle de lecture. Chaque enfant aura l'occasion de lire à haute voix à tour de rôle pendant des séances d'une heure. Les lundis à 16h jusqu'au 3 mars/ Mondays at 4 PM until March 3rd. Pour les 7 à 12 ans. Ages 7 to 12. 60 minutes.

Youth Writing Workshop – Short Stories with Catherine Austen

(ALTA VISTA BRANCH)

Join Catherine Austen, author of *All Good Children & When the Squirrels Stole my Sister*, for an interactive writing workshop. Use inspiration from your own life — or ignore reality completely — to create a fictional character and launch them into an exciting plot. Get tips and tricks to help you write a great short story. This workshop is presented as part of the Ottawa Public Library's Awesome Authors Youth Writing Contest. Saturdays February 21st at 2 PM. Ages 9 to 12.

Lego® Block Party

(ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH) Building Boom! Show off your architectural creativity with Lego®! Drop-in program. 60 minutes. Fridays, February 13th and April 24th at 1 PM.

Homework Help

(ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH) Come and get help with reading, math, science, French, English, etc. Led by United for Literacy volunteers. 90 minutes. Tuesdays at 5 PM except March 17th. For Grades one through ten.

■ ADULT PROGRAMMING

Windows Performance Tune-Up – PC Users Group

(ALTA VISTA BRANCH) If your Windows computer is getting sluggish, you don't have to re-install Windows just to gain back lost performance. Chris Taylor, President of the Ottawa PC Users' Group will demonstrate and explain how to safely use many native and free 3rd party tools that can help speed up Windows. Thursday, February 5th at 6 PM. 120 minutes. Registration required.

How to Buy a PC – PC Users Group

(ALTA VISTA BRANCH) When buying a PC, you are faced with a lot of choices: laptop or desktop; how many cores in the processor; Intel, AMD, or ARM processor; size of storage; how big a monitor; is it better to buy a faster processor or more memory. Chris Taylor, President of the Ottawa PC Users' Group will help sort out the choices so you can buy the computer that is right for your needs. Thursday, February 12th at 6 PM. 120 minutes. Registration required.

Origami (ALTA VISTA BRANCH) Meet new people and learn origami! Beginners welcome. Adults

only. Thursday, February 26th at 2:30 PM. 90 minutes. Registration required.

Adult Chess Club

(ALTA VISTA BRANCH) Join us for adult chess, all levels welcome; an instructor will be available! Come meet new people and have fun. No registration required. Ages 18+ Saturdays, February 14th and 28th, March 14th and 28th, at 3 PM. 60 minutes.

Memory Café

(ALTA VISTA BRANCH) An open house for persons with dementia, their care partners, and families.

Fun and stimulating mental activities are planned to enhance the social interactions and the connections that are built within the group. Light snacks and warm drinks are served alongside items that aim to spark conversations and reminiscing. Drop-in. Wednesday, February 25th, and March 25th at 1:30 PM. 120 minutes.

Employment Support Workshops

(ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH) Are you looking for a job? Come learn all the necessary skills to do so at the Elmvale Acres Branch of the Ottawa Public Library, with a program offered in conjunction with CCI Ottawa. Thursdays, February 5th and 12th, March 9th and 16th, at 6:30 PM. 90 minutes.

Community Writing Workshop

Experience the transformative power of writing in an inclusive space! Write together, share first drafts, listen deeply and receive supportive feedback. Tap into your story and explore your voice in an environment of dignity, courage and respect. No experience required. Beginners welcome. Materials provided. 18+.

(ALTA VISTA BRANCH) Mondays, 6:30 PM to 8 PM except February 16th. (ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH) Mondays, 6:30 PM to 8 PM except February 16th.

Fibre Club (ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH): Bring your knitting or crochet project (or needlepoint, cross-stitch, etc.) and share tips and tricks, ideas, and conversations with fellow enthusiasts. For adults of all abilities. Drop-in. Fridays at 2 PM. 90 minutes.

English Conversation Group

Practice your English conversation. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 35**

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 34

tion skills in a relaxed and friendly environment. All levels are welcome in this free program. Drop-in. (ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH) Mondays at 5:30 PM, Wednesdays at 6 PM. 60 minutes. (ALTA VISTA BRANCH) Tuesdays at 7 PM. 60 minutes.

Groupe de conversation en français (intermédiaire) / French Conversation Group (intermediate) Améliorez votre français parlé dans une ambiance décontractée. Ce groupe est de niveau intermédiaire. Aucune inscription requise. Improve your spoken French in a relaxed setting. This group is for those at an intermediate level. No registration required. (ALTA VISTA BRANCH) Wednesdays at 6:30 PM. Les mercredis à 18h30. 75 minutes. (ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH) Mondays at 6:30 PM. Les lundis à 18h30. No group on February 16th. Aucun rencontre le 16 février.

Sleuth Hounds

Mystery Book Club

(ALTA VISTA BRANCH) Share the enjoyment of good mysteries in a relaxed atmosphere.

Join us for discussions on the third Thursday of every month 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. All are welcome. Thursday, February 19th, 2026 – A Capital Mystery (Ottawa crime short stories) Thursday, March 19th, 2026 – Richard Osman – Any of the Thursday Murder Club books. Thursday, April 16th, 2026 – TBD

Elmvalle Acres Book Club

(ELMVALE ACRES BRANCH) Meet up with fellow book enthusiasts for discussions about the month's chosen book. Join us on the third Monday of the month at 2:00 pm. Monday, February 23rd, 2026 – *Finding Edward* by Sheila Murray Monday, March 23rd, 2026 – *The Stationery Shop* by Marjan Kamali Monday, April 20th, 2026 *The Missing Millionaire* by Katie Daubs

Book Banter

(ALTA VISTA BRANCH) Share the enjoyment of good books in a relaxed atmosphere. Join us for discussions on the first Thursday of every month 2 PM –

3 PM. All are welcome.

Thursday, February 5th, 2026 – *Fire Weather* by John Vaillant Thursday, March 5th, 2025 – *Outsider* by Brett Popplewell Thursday, April 2nd, 2026 – *Say Nothing – A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland*, by Patrick Radden Keefe

Infusions Littéraires (ALTA VISTA BRANCH)

Partagez avec nous le plaisir des livres dans une ambiance détendue. Joignez-vous à nous pour une discussion. De 14h00 à 15h00. mercredi le 18 février 2026 – *Le Livre des Soeurs* d'Amélie Nothomb mercredi le 11 mars 2026 – *Les yeux de Mona* de Thomas Schlessler Mars mercredi le 15 avril 2026 – *Paris-Briançon* de Philippe Besson

Please visit <https://bibliottawalibrary.ca/en/program> for the most up-to-date information about programming as well as registration or visit the branch in-person for more information.

ONLINE COLLECTIONS AND SERVICES

Please check out some of the activities and resources that we have for adults, teens, and kids alike.

These resources include:

- Digital eBooks and Audiobooks via Overdrive/Libby and CloudLibrary for English titles and Cantook Station for French titles.
- Language learning courses via Mango Languages.
- Streaming movies via Hoopla, the Kanopy Collection, Kanopy Kids and Access Video on Demand.
- Free magazines and newspapers via Flipster, Overdrive Magazines or PressReader.
- Children's resources for educational videos and online books such as Just for Kids and the Tumblebook Library.

To access these resources and much more, please visit <https://bibliottawalibrary.ca/en/databases/search-all>.

A valid Library card is required. For assistance, please call Info Service at 613-580-2940 or email infoservice@bibliottawalibrary.ca.

February 2026 EnviroTips[©]

Get familiar with the new recycling arrangement that took effect in Ottawa on January 1, 2026. Under the new recycling system, many more items can now be recycled including plastic bags, toothpaste tubes and deodorant. Learn more by visiting <https://www.circularmaterials.ca/news/ontario-new-materials/>.

Reduce food waste at home by visiting the Love Food Hate Waste Canada website. Follow their tips for reducing food waste of everything from avocados to zucchini, that can save you over \$1,300 a year! More than half of the food wasted in Ottawa households could have been eaten. This includes untouched leftovers and perfectly good food that was forgotten in the fridge or pantry

and spoiled before anyone had a chance to eat it.

Use a non-AI search engine other than AI tools like ChatGPT or a Large Language Model (LLM). A single query to ChatGPT uses 10 times the electricity of a typical Google search, according to analysts from Goldman Sachs Research,

Pick up garbage or recycling items left in front of your house after the garbage/recycling trucks have come by. Gather up items that fell out during the pick-up process and put them back in the garbage can or recycling box. This simple action prevents these items from being blown away or going down into the sewers.

Pick up plastic bags in shopping centre parking lots or shop-

ping carts. Prevent litter and waste by disposing of these bags or in a nearby garbage can. Clean unused bags left in carts can be used for other purposes and disposed of at home.

Use revolving doors when entering buildings unless you have a physical disability that prevents you from doing so. Revolving doors are more energy efficient than traditional swinging doors because they minimize air exchange, helping to maintain indoor temperatures and reduce heating and cooling costs. Using revolving doors can significantly lower energy consumption in buildings.

Check your printer queue before re-sending a document. If a document has not been printing out

due to printer error or lack of ink, check the printer queue under settings. IF there is an error message, then cancel the print job and start again. Otherwise, you may end up wasting paper and ink by printing out extra unwanted copies

Re-use leftover water after steaming vegetables. The water remaining in the pot has additional nutrients from the vegetables and can be used to water houseplants or as vegetable stock. (You can freeze it in a plastic container and thaw when you need it.)

EnviroTips is registered as a trademark by Kris Nanda with the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO)



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