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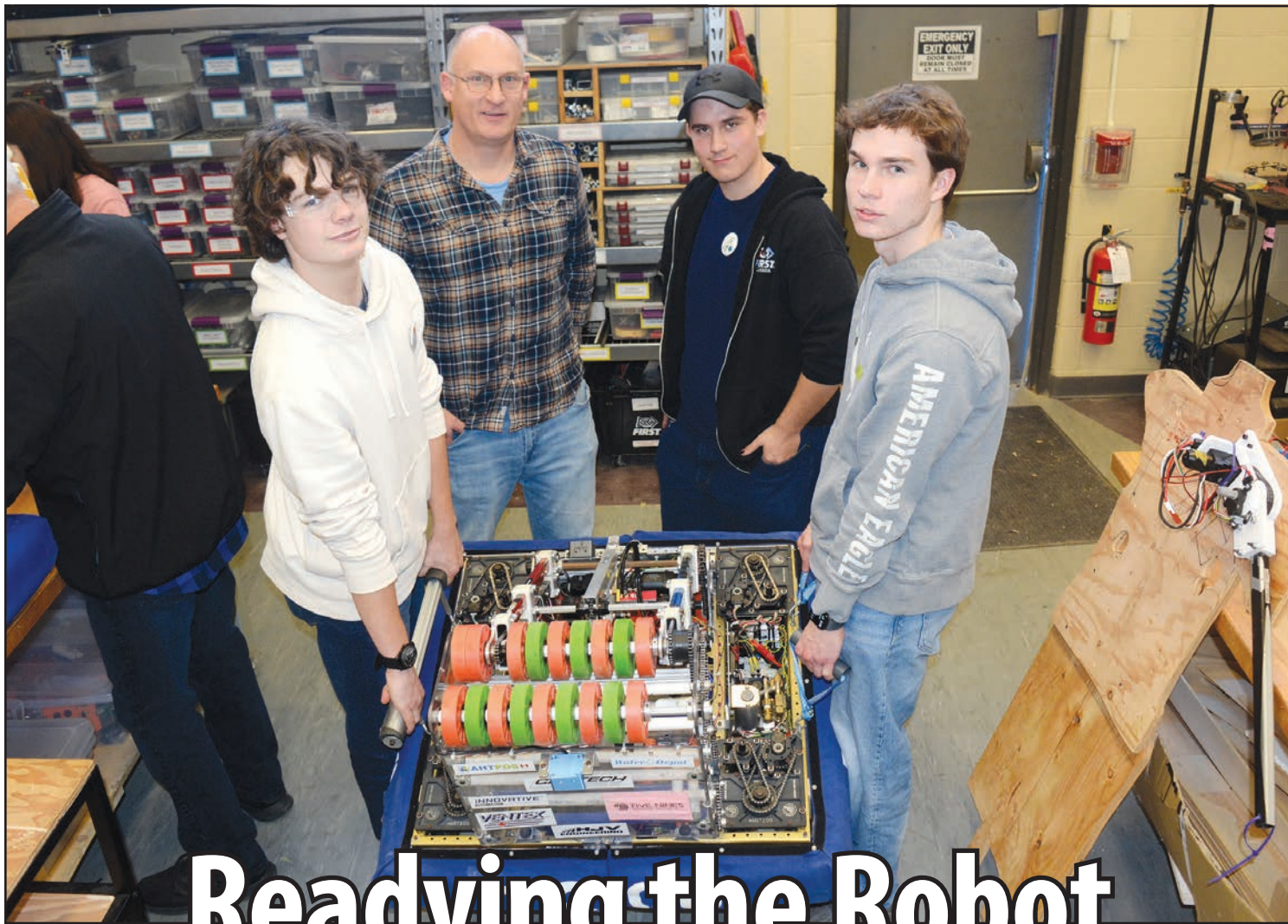
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Readying the Robot

The Banting Memorial High School Robotics team will be travelling to Germany in April to take part in the international Hanover Messe trade show. They will be taking a robot goalie with them as an exhibit. Robotics Club members Lucas Collis-Sirelpuu, Brayden La-Rocc, Ian Rennie, and teacher Bryan Haas, show a robot they built for a competition last year. The Robotics Team was invited to take part in the international event after debuting their robot goalie and impressing organizers. See the full story on Page 3. BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO

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Postal strike affecting Hospital Foundation donations

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The current strike by Canada Post employees is having a direct effect on charitable organizations across the country that rely on mail to receive donations.

There have been no negotiations since the postal workers went on strike and stopped delivering mail on Nov. 15.

While many charitable organizations accept donations through electronic means, some people still prefer to send a cheque to their favourite charity.

With many people inspired to give to causes around the holiday season, this time of year accounts for 40 to 60 per cent of donations given to many charities.

Many seniors who donate to charities have limited knowledge of electronic-based donation platforms and prefer to give donations by cheque.

The Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation (SMHF) is starting to feel the impact of the non-delivery of mail and is trying to minimize the impact of the strike.

SMHF CEO Frank Cerisano, while sympathetic to postal workers and their intentions, said the Foundation is “more concerned than anything else,” about the impact a prolonged strike will have on donations to the Foundation.

“It’s common knowledge that many charities across Canada still have donors that rely on the mail,” Mr. Cerisano said. “It won’t affect just the Hospital Foundation, but charities across the country. In December, the average charity will receive between 40 and 60 per cent of their donations. For the Hospital Foundation, this will represent around 15 per cent. We will start to contact donors offering online options, and see if they can get some online assistance. They are always welcome to drop off donations right at the hospital.”

Dropping off donations, however, may not be



POSTAL STRIKE IMPACT – The strike at Canada Post is preventing Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation from receiving holiday donations by mail, resulting in a reduced amount of donated funds through the holiday season. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

practical for someone who doesn’t drive or has mobility issues.

A drop in donations will mean “there will be less equipment bought for the hospital,” Mr.

Cerisano said, adding “We will get through this season. We’ll have a better idea of our financial standpoint later. We’re trying to minimize the impact.”

Simcoe County Council approves 2025 Budget with 3.6 per cent increase

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

County of Simcoe Council approved a \$962 million budget on Nov. 26, focused on the resources necessary to maintain existing services and address significant growth in its communities.

The 2025 budget includes strategic allocations that enable the County to continue to invest in services and assets such as infrastructure, long-term care, paramedic services, museum, transit, affordable housing, the Lake Simcoe Regional Airport, waste collections, economic development, tourism, and enhancements to the road network.

At the direction and approval of County

Council, residents will see a 3.625 per cent increase on the County portion of their municipal property taxes in 2025. This represents an impact of approximately \$10.86 per \$100,000 property assessment across the region.

Simcoe County residential property taxes fund \$224.6 million of the budget with the remaining amount from other revenues and funding streams.

“County Council and staff worked hard to limit the impact of this budget on our residents, while ensuring we maintain the ability to meet service demands and infrastructure needs as our communities continue to grow,” said County Warden Basil Clarke. “When times are challenging, the demand for County services is greater than ever. As we head

into 2025, we look forward to opening more affordable housing units, creating new spaces for those living unhoused, making driving easier and safer across our road network, supporting the environment through waste management and sustainability programs, creating more transit connections, supporting more seniors in need of care and services and creating more jobs as we build up Simcoe County.”

The County maintains a strong financial position having received an AA+ long-term issuer credit rating from S&P Global Ratings – a provider of high-quality market intelligence in the form of credit ratings and research.

The County’s 2025 budget includes new LINX Transit routes to serve South Simcoe communities, continued progress at the Simcoe Village Campus redevelopment, a large affordable housing build in Barrie and phased road work on CR4, 21, and 22.

The budget also includes a new paramedic station in Waubaushene, museum expansion for the C. Matthews Innovation and Transportation Gallery, and redevelopment of the Bradford West Gwillimbury waste drop-off facility.


The County of Simcoe’s total operating and capital expenditures for 2024 were \$962 million.

This includes:

- LTC homes - \$188 million
- Seniors services - \$12 million
- Paramedic services - \$83 million
- Children services \$151 million
- Social housing \$120 million
- Ontario works - \$85 million
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- Transportation and engineering \$89 million
- Solid waste management \$82 million

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Tires slashed at Tottenham Legion parking lot

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Nottawasaga Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police is currently investigating an act of mischief in Tottenham and looking for the public’s help in identifying a suspect who slashed the tires of a vehicle.

The vehicle was parked overnight in the Tottenham Legion parking lot located at 25 Richmond Street East on Friday, Nov. 15.

Video obtained shows that at approximately 1:43 am., a caucasian male, wearing

an all-black hoodie, blue jeans, and black and white shoes, approached the vehicle to the passenger side and proceeded to stab the tires.

The suspect then departed the area while placing an item in his pocket. he was last seen heading northbound on Elizabeth Street.

Nottawasaga OPP is requesting that anyone living in this area with video doorbell cameras or home exterior surveillance review footage to see if anyone matches the description.

If so, please contact Nottawasaga OPP at 1-888-310-1122 (ref E241523813).

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Banting robotics team heading to Germany for international event

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Several members of the Banting Memorial High School Robotics Team will be travelling to an international robotics event in Hanover, Germany during the first week of April next year. Coming with them is a robot goalie they plan to exhibit.

The Hanover Messe (German for fair), combines mechanical and electrical engineering with computer science to open up new horizons with robot technology.

The Robotics Club at Banting is a thriving and popular club where teachers and students work together on projects. Some of the projects are self-directed while others come in the form of a challenge where they can go up against other schools with the same challenge.

When the team travels to Germany, they will be taking their robot goalie with them. The robot goalie is designed to stop hockey pucks using a high-tech design and cameras that can read the trajectory of a puck flying toward it.

The high school's robotics club was started in 2019 and quickly became popular among students who have an interest in science and robots in particular. They prefer to be known as a team rather than a club because everyone contributes in different ways to the projects they build.

"Our main focus is something called First Robotics," explained Banting faculty member Bryan Haas, who leads the club. "First Robotics has a big competition every year. Every year there's a new competition and we don't know what it is until the first Saturday in January. They are high school competitions but usually they are held at bigger venues like universities. We built a dancing robot three years ago."

The dancing robot came about when a film

director was so impressed with the school's work, that he asked if they could build a robot for a film.

"They asked if we could build a dancing robot that looked like an alien from another planet, and I said 'sure,'" Mr. Haas explained. "The next week TSN called and asked if we could build a robot goalie. They thought it was so awesome they asked us to bring it into the studio live, and they'll have a show where people shoot on it. We were live on TSN with the goalie. The robot has a camera and could see the puck and make saves on its own," Mr. Haas said, adding, "We have 10 students and four mentors going to Hanover. I've got some of the smartest kids in the school here."

The kids in the robotics club all have an interest in robotics in some way. Some design, some do the actual mechanics and assembly, and others do the coding for the robot to operate.

Several students lead the different divisions. The robotics room at the high school is a busy place as all the students work on their assignments and focus on the task at hand.

Grade 12 student Ian Rennie is one of the leaders and said he hopes his experience on the robotics team will help him in pursuing a career in computer science.

"Mr. Haas suggested I join the club and said it would be something that would help me out in the future with computers and technology because I want to go into computer science," Ian said. "It will teach me more about the field and help me make connections and help with any jobs I might want in the future. I checked it out, and in Grade 10 I spent time on the team. As you get older you spend more time on the team. It's a big learning curve. This year we have the Grade 9s doing small robots and we've got Grades 10 and 11 building flat robots which are really simple so they

have their own competition. We've got Grade 12s and some Grade 11s building the goalie robot."

Ian is a member of the team that will be going to Germany.

Grade 10 student, Vienna Wilson, joined the Robotics Club after taking Mr. Haas' computer tech course last year and he suggested the Club might be something she would enjoy.

"I decided to try something new and I fell in love with it," Vienna explained. "There's a lot of creative freedom. You can pretty much build anything out of any material and there's really no limits. Right now I'm building the Germany robot and I do a lot of the building on the inside."

Vienna will be travelling to Germany as part of the team.

"I'm looking forward to representing Can-

ada on such a large scale, and getting the opportunity to go to Germany and do this at a giant trade show – and being the only high school team, I'd say that's a real reward," Vienna said. "I do see this in my future now that I'm getting more involved in the robotics side of things. I'm seeing this as an opportunity to go into something in the future."

Several parents who have related skills are involved with the robotics team to lend advice and professional experience. Some former students who were part of the team when they were in high school, also returned to help with the projects.

The Banting robot goalie has already impressed a lot of people here and will certainly leave a big impression on the thousands of people who will be attending the show in Germany.



SHOP WITH A COP – Officers from the Nottawasaga Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police paired up with students from local schools to participate in the annual 'Shop with a Cop' event at the Canadian Tire in Alliston on Saturday, Nov. 23. The program is designed to provide gifts and a positive experience to elementary-aged children and their families. Each school was asked to select one deserving student. Each student was given the opportunity to spend time with an OPP member while shopping for gifts for their families and picking out one for themselves. Each student was also provided with a gift card donated by private sponsors, local businesses, and the public. Organizations that helped make this event possible include Canadian Tire Alliston, Nottawasaga Inn, the Police Services Board, McDonalds Alliston, No Frills Tottenham, Heart2HomeDoodels, and Tim Hortons Tottenham. **CONTRIBUTED PHOTO**



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Editorial, Letters & Opinion

“The window to the world can be covered by a newspaper.”

~ Stanislaw Jerzy Lec

How hot is it?

Have you ever listened to a weather forecast on the radio and the announcer says something like “it’s 26 degrees, but it feels like 31.”

You hear this all the time.

If it’s 26 degrees, isn’t that what the current temperature actually feels like? How can it feel hotter, when what you are experiencing, is the actual feeling of what it’s like at that temperature?

When the colder weather arrives and your furnace comes on, you don’t set the thermostat to 17 because it will feel like 22.

A lot of times, sayings we hear or use on a daily basis, really don’t make a lot of sense or have an origin that most people have never heard of.

“Money can’t buy happiness.” That’s an old saying implying that happiness is something that comes from within. In a way, there’s some truth to that. I guess you can be poor, but keep a good outlook on things.

However, I’ve never heard anyone say “Financial stability is horrible.”

I’ve never seen a lottery winner pick up their winnings with a scowl on their face and say “I wish I didn’t win this money.”

Studies have shown that people who make higher salaries are generally happier because they don’t have the same anxiety when it comes to finding the money for monthly bills.

A lack of money and financial stability is a leading cause of strife in a marriage, and quite often can lead to divorce.

I’m pretty sure having money will make you happy.

“Turning a blind eye” implies that a person will not admit to seeing something they don’t want to see.

That phrase, according to legend, was born when British Navy hero, Horatio Nelson, who was quite the guy, was told to withdraw during a naval battle. Nelson held his telescope up to his blind eye, and said, “I really do not see the signal.”

I think he deserves to be in the history books on that alone.

On the subject of ships, the phrase, ‘show your true colours’, comes from a time when pirates would deliberately fly a false flag to encourage potential targets to come within range.

Only when they were close enough to attack, would the pirates run their real flag, and intentions, up to the top of the mast.

That’s one you should remember when dealing with shady used car dealers.

‘Winning hands down,’ generally means someone has won a competition by a large margin. The phrase comes from horse racing where jockeys use their riding crop on a horse’s rear quarters to tell the horse to give it more effort.

If a horse has a comfortable lead and is going to win, the jockey doesn’t need to use the crop and this is known as winning ‘hands down.’

‘Saved by the bell’ or ‘being a dead ringer’ have a rather macabre reference.

During Victorian England, and probably earlier, a lot of people had a fear of being buried alive. Someone came up with the idea of having an above-ground bell with a line attached to the deceased’s finger.

If someone was buried prematurely, they could ring the bell and alert anyone walking by.

I think the better option would be to make sure someone is actually dead before you bury them.

I’m pretty sure ‘saved by the bell’ in the modern sense comes from boxing when the bell rings to end the round

before an eight-count is completed.

‘Break a leg’, is something said to actors before they go on stage, usually on opening night, as a way of wishing them success.

In theatre circles, which are notoriously superstitious, wishing someone ‘good luck’ is a bad omen.

The phrase ‘break a leg’ may refer to an actor bending at the knee or to curtsy at the end of a performance to acknowledge the audience’s enthusiastic response.

Others think it comes from the fact that actor John Wilkes Booth broke his leg after shooting President Lincoln after leaping from his box seat to the stage and limping off into the night to escape.

How committing a murder equates to wishing someone well - seems a little misguided.

Finally, there is the phrase, ‘Saskatchewan is so flat you can watch your dog run away for three days.’

There’s a lot of truth in that saying, but don’t tell the folks in Dog River, they’ve heard it too many times already.

BRIAN LOCKHART
FROM THE SECOND ROW



Tradition vs. Tradition

Everyone has their own special traditions that help get them into the holiday spirit.

A lucky few of us are in the holiday spirit year-round, brainstorming gift and party ideas as soon as the dust has settled on Boxing Day. Others, however, need the conditions to be just right.

Maybe the snow has to start flying in earnest before you can hear the distant sound of Jingle Bells in your head – a silver lining for those of us in Simcoe County still digging out from the weekend’s massive snow dump! – or maybe the real signal for the start of the season is finding that perfect place for an heirloom ornament on an ever-green bough, real or fake.

Maybe that perfect thing to kick-start the merriment is the spirit of fellowship that comes with gathering with your neighbours to help light your community’s collective Christmas tree, as experienced in Aurora on Friday evening.

If holiday is usually a time of stress for you, maybe you can’t really lean into the spirit until your shopping is done or your office Christmas party is in the books, knowing you can now well and truly relax

– at least for a few days – and give the yuletide the attention it deserves.

Perhaps your holiday spirit is triggered by the senses, whether it’s hearing a favourite character, sampling a culinary tradition unique to this time of year, or getting that singular whiff that only comes from a freshly cut tree or a simmering pot of mulled cider or wine.

I’ve always been a big fan of Christmas, and that often starts with the putting up the tree in the latter half of November and opening that exciting first door on the advent calendar at the start of the month.

While the tree is not up yet for various reasons, a highlight of this past Sunday was opening up that first door. Now, we’re spoiled for choice these days when it comes to advent calendars. Most of us who have used our fingers to perforate that sometimes hard-to-open cardboard flap have a sentimental attachment to that distinctly chalky chocolatey nugget that advent calendars have pushed for generations; I’ve graduated myself to something a little more adult – craftier chocolate, mind you, not one of those groovier numbers that offer

a shot of 24 different tipples. But, in doing so, I have inadvertently started a new tradition with some of my favourite youngsters in California.

Last fall, I visited one of my closest friends in Los Angeles and, as a gift, brought her three children a calendar from one of our more upscale chocolate emporiums. As the kiddos’ ages range from one-and-a-half to sixteen-going-on-seventeen, I figured chocolate would be the one thing to satisfy all three sets of tastebuds, and I wasn’t wrong.

“This is the best chocolate ever,” one of the three opined, so it was clear that even though I wasn’t bound for California this time around, a tradition worth maintaining had started.

As it’s a bit of a crunch time around here, my mom was kind enough to pick up this year’s calendar – just as the Canada Post strike hit. Reluctant to give in and just send it off via courier, as we were bound for a day trip to the States a short time later, Plan A became bringing it with us to post from upstate New York. The day we were there, however, our designated post office closed

exceptionally early, so that was that.

Plan B, which should have been Plan A, was a trip to a local courier.

Admittedly, my initial hesitation was the cost of such a service, but was pleasantly surprised my imagination had vastly inflated reality. Not only that, they had the perfect-sized box to fit the awkwardly-shaped chocolate delivery system, and guaranteed it would be there by the time the first door came a-knockin’.

So far so good – until something went awry with the tracking number, leaving me to hope their guarantee was still in place, as enquiring at the destination too early would have, of course, spoiled the surprise.

Thankfully, everything aligned just right, and mere minutes after I answered my own cardboard door, I got a photo of the trio excitedly doing the exact same thing at almost the exact same time.

Surprise made and crisis averted.

Continued on Page 11

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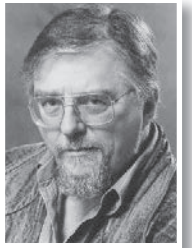
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Syria: Jihadis again

GWYNNE DYER
OUR WORLD TODAY



One week in, the cease-fire in Lebanon seems to be holding, but everything is connected: only three days later, the civil war in Syria started up again after a de facto four-year truce.

In just a few days more the Sunni Muslim fanatics of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), formerly the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda, burst out of the north-western province of Idlib where they had been confined since 2016 and captured Aleppo, Syria's second biggest city.

The Syrian army has completely withdrawn from Aleppo, and its spokesman explained that "the multiplicity of battlefronts prompted our armed forces to carry out a redeployment operation aimed at strengthening the defence lines in order to absorb the attack, preserve the lives of civilians and soldiers, and prepare for a counterattack."

'Redeployment' usually means 'retreat', and at last report HTS forces were advancing down the main north-south freeway and nearing the city of Hama, almost halfway to Damascus. This may not be a replay of the Western scramble out of Afghanistan

and the Taliban victory of 2021, but the future of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad is certainly at risk. However, two things are different this time. One is that Assad has the unwavering support of Russia (whose air force is already striking the rebel forces from its bases in Syria). The other is that a large number of Syrians (all Christians, all Shia Muslims and an indeterminate number of Sunni Muslims) prefer even Assad to the rule of the HTS fanatics.

It's no coincidence that the war in Syria restarted just as Hezbollah was defeated in Lebanon, since Lebanon and Syria were part of the same province for most of the last thousand years. The French divided them in 1920, ostensibly because there was a big Christian minority in Lebanon but really as part of an imperial strategy of divide-and-rule.

One-third of the Lebanese are still Christians, but what drives the country's politics now is the rivalry between Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims. Each accounts for about a third of the population, but the Shias have dominated Lebanese politics in recent

decades because they had their own powerful army, Hezbollah. That army has now suffered a grave defeat.

Syria also has a Shia minority, though a much smaller one: between 10% and 15% of the population. However, Shias completely dominate Syrian politics because the French filled the upper ranks of their colonial army with Shias on the same old divide-and-rule principle – and the Shias parlayed that into permanent political dominance over the whole country.

For Sunnis in both Lebanon and Syria, the Shias are the main enemy. Once the Israelis had decimated Hezbollah's forces in Lebanon over the past two months, therefore, it was only natural for Sunni extremists in Syria to have another go at overthrowing their local Shia enemy, the Assad regime.

It is far from certain that they will succeed, but HTS has definitely caught the Assad regime with its pants down and is building up a momentum that will be hard to resist. What would happen if Assad and the Shias actually lost power in Syria?

It would be a catastrophe for the people of Syria, who would end up living under an Islamist tyranny that would be even more repressive and brutal than the current regime. On the other hand, it could be a boon for the long-suffering Lebanese, whom Hezbollah keeps dragging into wars with Israel that most Lebanese would rather

avoid.

It would be a disaster for the Islamist (Shia) ayatollahs of Iran. They would lose half of their 'Axis of Resistance', the band of mostly Shia-run allies that protect Iran from direct physical confrontation with Israel. Those allies include Iraq, Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the Houthis in Yemen.

Could these serial upheavals end up overthrowing the Iranian regime itself? It's not impossible, if all the other Shia dominoes fall one after another. Whatever regime replaced the ayatollahs would also be Shia, because 95% of Iranians follow that branch of Islam, but its policies and allies might be very different.

But it is too early to say that any of the dominoes will fall, let alone all of them. It's just as likely that HTS, successor to al-Qaeda and ISIS and now making such rapid progress in Syria, will over-extend itself, and that the Syrian army, Russian air power and quiet support from Egypt and the Arab Gulf states will eventually drive the jihadis back.

That would be the least bad outcome, although it is certainly not a good one. If you doubt that, look at the images of HTS fighters moving south. Half of them show men with a single finger pointing to the sky: 'There is only one God, and we will impose his rule.'

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CROSSWORD

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1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	
11				12		13			14			
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48					49			50	51	52	53	54
55					56			57				58
59					60			61				
62					63				64			

CLUES ACROSS

- Bar bills (abbr.)
- Recipe measurement
- Swiss river
- Czech Republic capital
- "Officially known as"
- A French abbot
- Having a strong sharp smell or taste
- Local area network
- Data transmission speed measure
- Embarrass
- When you hope to get there
- This (Spanish)
- Gives up
- Churchgoer
- Current
- Slang for gun
- Small drum
- Vanished union bigwig
- Rocker's tool of

the trade

- Dearth
- 2024 Olympics host
- Excess blood in the vessels
- Afrikaans
- Agreement between provider and customer
- Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- Ancient Syrian city
- Witch
- Celebrations
- Long period of time
- A team's best pitcher
- Current unit company
- French/Belgian river
- Swedish rock group

CLUES DOWN

- Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- Genus of clams
- Remark
- Actor LaBeouf
- Ohio town
- Olympic sport
- Cure
- Behave in a way that belittles
- Shares a boundary with
- Give advice
- Promotional materials
- Assist or encourage, usually in some wrongdoing
- "Agatha All Along" actress Kathryn
- Small piece
- King of Camelot
- Parts per thousand (abbr.)
- Small Milky Way constellation
- One who challenges authority (abbr.)
- Equal (prefix)
- Shawl
- S. American wood
- sorrel relative
- The end
- Supervises interstate commerce
- Yes vote
- Officer of high rank
- Church office
- Tire pressure measurement
- From a distance
- Photographs
- Industrial process
- Nobel Prize-winning physicist
- Map out
- Mammary gland part of female mammal
- Honorable title (Turkish)
- Spongelike cake leavened with yeast
- Speak incessantly
- Poetry term
- Relaxing space

No one has more self-confidence than the person who does a crossword puzzle with a pen.

County of Simcoe launches new Affordable Housing Dashboard

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER



The County of Simcoe has launched its new Affordable Housing Dashboard.

This tool is designed to help users explore and understand housing trends within their community through a comprehensive selection of population insights and affordable housing metrics available at the local municipal level.

“The launch of the Affordable Housing Dashboard marks yet another significant step

forward in our commitment to informed decision-making in regard to affordable housing,” said County Warden Basil Clarke. “By providing accessible and comprehensive data,

we empower our community to better understand and address the housing challenges we continue to face. This dashboard will prove extremely useful in helping everyone in the County to gain a better understanding of our housing market.”

The Affordable Housing Dashboard aims to support elected officials, civil servants, media, local service providers, academics, and residents in answering critical questions about the local housing continuum.

By providing access to key data indicators, the dashboard helps users assess the health

of the housing market through the following questions:

- 1 - Is the supply of housing keeping up with demand?
- 2 - How affordable is housing?
- 3 - How much choice is there in the housing market?
- 4 - What is the level of Core Housing Need?

This dashboard is a County-specific replication of a previous design by the Community Data Program.

The dashboard is now live and can be accessed at: <http://open.simcoe.ca>.

Local agri-food industry receives boost from government funding

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Ontario is partnering with the federal government to support local agri-food businesses through the Agri-Tech Innovation Initiative which aims to enhance operational efficiencies and productivity.

Brian Saunderson, MPP for Simcoe-Grey, announced that over \$627,000 in funding has been set aside for the riding.

Some of the local recipients include Paton Poultry Breeders in Everett, Glenn Whiteside Farms in Alliston, Ardiel Acres Ltd. from Clarksburg, Double J. Poultry in Everett, and Somerville Nurseries in Everett.

“By funding and supporting innovation in the important agriculture sector in our riding, we are driving economic growth in the region,” said MPP Saunderson. “I look forward to the positive ripple effects this will have throughout our local communities.”

The Agri-Tech Innovation Initiative will support 319 farming and agri-businesses across the province through an investment of up to \$22.6 million. Funding will be used to help them invest in innovative technology, equipment or processes that will increase their resiliency, productivity and efficiency.

“Our government knows that supporting innovation in Ontario’s agriculture and

food sector is key to it reaching its potential, while securing our collective ability to achieve the ambitious goals in our Grow Ontario Strategy,” said Rob Flack, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness. “These investments will allow established and emerging businesses to speed up efforts to optimize their operations and support growth for our agriculture and food sector.”

The Agri-Tech Innovation Initiative was developed following discussions with Ontario’s farming and agribusiness industry. It is part of a series of initiatives the government has implemented to support these businesses and is funded through the Sus-

tainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Under the program, applicants could receive up to 50 per cent of their eligible project costs for investments of up to \$100,000.

For projects requiring a larger investment, applicants could receive up to 35 per cent of their eligible project costs for up to \$100,000 funding.

For projects that improve energy efficiency at eligible businesses, cost share percentage and maximum funding available per business was up to 35 per cent cost-share up to \$100,000.

Approved projects are to be completed by the end of 2027.

Track Your Plow app provides real-time road maintenance information

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

With the winter weather approaching, you

may want to check your route before heading out on a day after a snowfall.

The Town of New Tecumseth’s Track Your Plow web application provides New

Tecumseth residents with information during a winter event.

When you use the app, a map will display the current status of roads during plowing, snow clearing, and salting or sanding.

The map will show an image of a plow at its latest location where it is actively deployed.

Information provided includes roads serviced within the last 8 hours, the last 8-16 hours, within 16-24 hours, or an area with no recent servicing.

The Track Your Plow service is available 24/7 and is updated automatically to provide residents with up-to-date information.

A search address feature is also available.

An address may be entered and the map will zoom to a specific location.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Annual Holiday Giving Campaign

This holiday season, we kindly ask you to consider giving the gift of compassionate hospice care in our community. Each year, Matthews House Hospice Foundation must raise over \$2 million to continue to serve South Simcoe.

Loretta was a resident of Matthews House Hospice for 4 months. During that time, her daughter, Michelle, was comforted knowing that Loretta was safe and cared for with all of her needs met.

Over
210
residents
supported each
year

“I was talking to a friend who asked if I knew of Matthews House and that I should bring my mother there when her health declined. I’ve had to deal with palliative care before and honestly it is quite scary and depressing. This was the exact opposite. From the first minute we arrived, we were greeted warmly and led into this bright, clean, cheerful and lovely room.

Being at Matthews House Hospice gave me the gift of having my mom cared for allowing me to just spend time with her. She was spoiled by everyone there; they all knew how to make her specific breakfast which was really the only thing she enjoyed eating and also that Loretta wanted her tea in a china teacup. I have felt so supported during this entire process and Matthews House made a very sad situation manageable. We are so lucky to have a place like this in our community.” -Michelle, Loretta’s Daughter

Average
length of stay is
10
days



Loretta

You can help us care for families like Loretta and Michelle.

Give the gift of compassionate hospice care...

- Online at Matthews.House**
- Over the phone at 705-435-7218**
- E-Transfer to donations@matthews.house**
- In person at Matthews House**

Happy
Holidays



Matthews House
Hospice Foundation

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Stevenson Memorial Hospital welcomes internationally trained physician

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The team at Stevenson Memorial Hospital is proud to be serving as a Practice Ready Ontario clinical field assessment site and is pleased to welcome Dr. Masha Samadi to its staff.

Practice Ready Ontario is the government of Ontario’s new program for internationally trained family physicians who already have clinical practice experience.

It is part of the plan to expand the healthcare workforce and connect people to care in high need rural communities.

Dr. Samadi is one of 30 internationally trained physicians participating in 12-week clinical assessments in rural communities across Ontario. In Alliston, Dr. Samadi will be directly supervised and assessed by Dr.

Ihab Khalil within the Alliston Family Health Team, as well as with various physicians at the hospital in the emergency, medical and surgical departments.

“We’re thrilled to have Dr. Samadi join our team of physicians at Stevenson,” said Dr. Roger Musa, Chief of Staff, SMH.

“We’re proud to have our hospital chosen as a Practice Ready Ontario clinical field assessment site and know that she will get a lot out of her experience in a busy community hospital Emergency Department that is in demand, as well as a busy primary care practice.”

Originally trained in Iran, Dr. Samadi appreciates experiencing the fast pace as well as the variety of cases that she gets to see in the emergency department at SMH.

She has enjoyed getting to know some of the hospital’s staff and physicians as well as members of the community.



TRAINING UNDERWAY – Stevenson Memorial Hospital welcomes a new internationally trained physician through the Practice Ready Ontario program. Dr. Masha Samadi, seen here with Dr. Ihab Khalil, was trained in Iran and is part of the program for internationally trained family physicians who already have clinical practice experience. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

Know your rights when having a vehicle towed in Ontario

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Over the past several years there has been growing concern in Ontario over unscrupulous tow companies that take advantage of people after an automobile accident or those needing a tow for a disabled vehicle.

New legislation has been put into place to help consumers get a fair shake when stranded on the side of the road.

Tow truck drivers, towing companies, and vehicle storage providers must abide by a code of conduct and be certified to offer services in Ontario.

As a consumer, you have rights related to providing consent to tow, where your vehicle is towed, accessing your vehicle, vehicle

storage facilities, and rates and payment.

As of Jan. 1, 2024, tow operators are required by law to have a certificate of operation in Ontario and show the name of the company and the certificate number on all their tow trucks as well as on consent forms and invoices. Tow truck drivers must present a copy of their tow driver certificate upon request.

When it comes to consent to tow, unless initiated by the police or an authorized official, your consent is required to tow your vehicle.

You have the right to choose which company will tow your vehicle (except in a restricted tow zone), and to choose where your vehicle will be towed.

Before moving your vehicle, tow truck drivers and towing companies must give you

their rates and give you a list of your rights as a customer.

They must get your consent to tow on a form that includes the name of the tow driver and operator, the tow driver’s certificate number if they have one, and their operator certificate number.

They must give you an unaltered copy of the form that documents your consent and contains all information required from them by law.

Do not sign a blank document. Make sure the required information is on the form before you sign it.

When towing your vehicle, tow drivers must take the most direct route when dropping off your vehicle at the location they have been instructed to bring it to and take reason-

able precautions to avoid further damage to your vehicle.

You, or the person acting on behalf of the vehicle owner are allowed to access the vehicle unless police direct you to not access the vehicle.

The rates for towing or vehicle storage services must be given to you before providing services.

Operators must also post their rates at their office or place of business, on their website (if they have one), and at the location where your vehicle is stored.

The towing or storage operator cannot charge you more than their maximum rate.

These rules are in place to protect consumers and make sure the towing industry is competitive and regulated.

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Batavia

HOMES

SMH Auxiliary donates over \$30,000 to support advanced patient care

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation has announced a donation of \$33,641 from the Stevenson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary.

This donation will enhance patient care at SMH by purchasing an Innowave Ultra+ Sonic Irrigator – a cutting-edge device designed to improve the cleaning and sterilization of medical instruments.

The Innowave Ultra+ Sonice Irrigator, known for its advanced ultrasonic cleaning technology, provides superior instrument decontamination by delivering high-frequency sound waves combined with powerful irrigation. This ensures that even the most intricate surgical tools are thoroughly cleaned, preventing infection and improving patient safety during medical procedures.

“We are thankful to the SMH Auxiliary and community which help fund important equipment needs, year after year,” said Barbara Steed, interim president and CEO of SMH. “The Innowave Ultra+ Sonic Irrigator is a crucial

addition to our hospital, allowing us to continue meeting the highest standards of cleanliness and care. The Stevenson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary continues to inspire through its fundraising initiatives, showcasing how community-driven efforts can transform healthcare delivery.”

Through the Auxiliary’s efforts, funded through initiatives like Tag Days and Annual Raffle sales, the Auxiliary has contributed over \$1.1 million since the Auxiliary’s founding in 1928.

“We’re proud to help provide this essential equipment for Stevenson Memorial Hospital,” said Carla Beckett, president of the Stevenson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary. “The community’s support of our fundraising efforts has made this possible, and we’re incredibly thankful for everyone’s contributions.”

Frank Cerisano, CEO of SMHF, added, “We are so grateful for the ongoing dedication of the Stevenson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary. Their hard work and commitment ensure that our hospital remains at the forefront of patient care, and this donation is another example of their impact in supporting quality healthcare in our region.



– The Stevenson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary presents a cheque for \$33,641, to the Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation. The funds will be used to purchase an Innowave Ultra+ Sonic Irrigator used for sterilizing medical instruments. Ted Vandevs, chair of the Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation Board, receives the cheque from Carla Beckett, president of the Stevenson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary and members of the Auxiliary. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

Family dispute results in criminal charges for Alliston man

The Nottawasaga Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) has charged an individual following a family dispute.

On Dec. 2, at approximately 12:02 p.m., police responded an address on Tupper Street East, in the Town of New Tecumseth, regarding a report of a dispute between family members.

An investigation revealed that this family member was on conditions not to be at the residence.

Upon arrival the individual had fled East-bound on Tupper St East in a vehicle with no licence plates.

Nottawasaga OPP officers stopped the vehicle shortly after where it was determined that the driver was operating the vehicle while prohibited and arrested on an outstanding warrant.

The male was held for a bail hearing and is to appear in Bradford court Dec. 3.

Jamie Mulholland, 35, from Alliston, is

charged with the following:

- Operation While Prohibited under the Criminal Code - two counts
 - Driving while under suspension
 - Drive motor vehicle, no plates
 - Drive motor vehicle, no permit
 - Operate a motor vehicle without insurance
 - Fail to Comply with Probation Order
- None of the listed charges have been proven in court.



Ask an Expert Series focuses on engaging post-secondary students

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

There is another edition of Ask and Expert coming up and it will focus on how to partner with local post-secondary schools to help build a robust talent pool for an organization.

The series is hosted by the County of Simcoe Economic Development Office.

Guest speakers will be Jessica Lovett,

director of career services and co-op with Lakehead University, and Brett Wismer, employer relations consultant of co-operative education and career success with Georgina College.

During the webinar, attendees will learn about effective strategies for talent acquisition – this will cover various methods you can use to attract and retain talent by engaging with local post-secondary institutions.

They’ll also learn about partnerships with Georgian College and Lakehead University – specific insights will be shared on how to establish and maintain meaningful partnerships with two of the biggest post-secondary schools in Simcoe County.

As well, the webinar will focus on the Enhancing Talent Strategy – this discussion will highlight how collaborating with local schools can drive innovation and growth

within organizations.

By participating in this webinar you will gain valuable knowledge on how to leverage local educational resources to strengthen your organization’s talent pool, ultimately contributing to its long-term success.

This webinar will take place on Wednesday, Dec. 4, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

This is a free webinar but you must register online at Microsoft Teams Webinar.



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Inspiring Faith, Igniting Hope

Poilievre rallies business community at Treasure Mills

BY BROCK WEIR

Aurora-based food producer Treasure Mills was a sea of excitement on November 29 as the school snack maker welcomed Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre to its Engelhard Drive facility.

There to meet with workers and to hold a roundtable discussion with members of the local business community, the Leader of the Opposition followed his tour with a rally with supporters.

At the event, where he was supported by Federal Conservative candidates Sandra Cobena (Newmarket-Aurora) and Costas Menegakis (Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill), Poilievre told the crowd it was time to “axe” the Carbon Tax, put in measures to keep homegrown businesses on this side of the border, address the housing crisis by removing the GST on new home purchases under \$1 million, and to restore a “warrior culture” rather than a “woke” culture to the Canadian identity.

Following a speech to supporters, he met with local media where he underscored his campaign commitments, including how they dovetail with a 25 per cent tariff on Canadian goods exported to the United States, as floated by US President-Elect Donald Trump.

“I think it would be devastating if that were to happen,” said Poilievre on the proposed tariff. “We have already lost half a trillion in

investment from Canada to the US and the gap between the Canadian-US economy is worse than it has been in a century. A combination of Trudeau’s tax increases and Donald Trump’s tariffs would be crippling to our economy. We need to take action now: axe the carbon tax, take GST off new homes, reduce taxes on investment, reduce red tape so we can get faster building permits and drive a hard bargain with President Trump to protect our economy and get him to back down from these tariffs.”

For a community like Aurora that has a high manufacturing presence, particularly in the automotive industry, Poilievre said that Prime Minister Trudeau’s “destructive policies” have resulted in the loss of jobs in the manufacturing sector.

“We need to lower energy costs by axing the carbon tax, we need to unleash the production of Canadian resources by permitting more mines, more pipelines, more oil and gas production – that would generate more demand for manufactured products that come out of Aurora and support our resource sector.

“We also need to back the trades, get more boots not more suits, to build the economy of the future.”

When asked how his proposal to eliminate the GST on home purchases under \$1 million in a community like Aurora where the price of townhomes regularly top that threshold, the

Leader of the Opposition said it was time to “stop and take a breath” and consider the factors that led to rising housing costs.

“Ten years ago, even in Aurora, \$1 million would have bought you a castle. What happened?” he said. “Trudeau doubled housing costs. He did that with out-of-control money printing and immigration that ballooned demand and with billions of dollars for local bureaucracies that block construction. What’s the solution? We have to stop the money-printing, rein in immigration, and incentivize municipalities to free up land, speed up permits and cut development charges to build 15 per cent more per year. We also have to take the GST and get the provinces to do the same – take the PST off – and that would save over \$100,000 on every newly-built home. The biggest problem with housing: too much taxes. A third of the cost of every new home in Ontario today is just new taxes. Should you get rid of those taxes and almost everyone would be able to afford a home.

“Right now, developers can go down to North Carolina and they can get a permit in two weeks and they pay probably \$30,000 or \$40,000 development charge. When they come here and they wait two or three years, then they pay \$200,000 in development charges. Where do you think they are going to build homes? It’s extremely uncompetitive to build anything in Canada. Our goal should

be to have the fastest building permits in the developed world and the lowest taxes on homes. That’s what I am going to be fighting for.”

Another factor, he said, was to get rid of “woke” culture in favour of a “warrior” culture. Asked to unpack his definition of “woke” when some critics liken “woke” to having empathy towards one’s neighbour, he described it as “the latest version of communism.”

“It’s designed to divide people by race, religion, gender, vaccine status, wealth and other dividing lines,” he continued. “It divides people to give more control to the government. It is an extremely destructive ideology and we’re seeing Canada... everything is broken in Canada after nine years of Trudeau: 1,400 homeless encampments, the immigration system is a total mess, the border is falling apart, crime is up by 50 per cent, gun crime is up 116 per cent, homelessness is up 38 per cent. I don’t know if you call any of that empathetic, but this is the result of the woke agenda. It is a corrosive, toxic, horrific ideology and we have to end it.

“It’s about control, and it is about taking over people’s wallets, their lives and their thoughts, and we must put an end to ‘wokeism’ and bring back the common-sense consensus that we had for Canada: to make Canada the best place on earth.”

Southlake Regional Health Centre changes name for 100th anniversary

BY BROCK WEIR

As our local hospital continues its 100th anniversary celebration, it has adopted a new name and a new vision for the future.

To mark both the anniversary and its release of a new strategy for the decade ahead, Southlake Regional Health Centre will now be known as Southlake Health.

According to the hospital, the streamlined name “better reflects a renewed focus on integrated, patient-centred care, signalling a commitment to delivering care across the continuum – whether in hospital settings, outpatient facilities, through community-based programs, virtually or at home.”

“Today, we begin to build on Southlake’s incredible 100-year foundation in a bold way,” said Marilee Harris, Board Chair

for Southlake Health, in a November 27 statement. “Our commitment to expanding care closer to home by taking a distributed approach, along with our partners, is a response to our communities’ needs and a reflection of our mission to always put people first.”

The decade ahead will be transformative for Southlake Health as it aims to grow in tandem with the communities it serves in northern York Region, south Simcoe County, and a much wider catchment area for specialties like cancer and cardiac care.

They’re on the hunt for a new campus to supplement their long-time base on Davis Drive in Newmarket and have been undertaking extensive consultations within the community to identify future needs.

“The municipalities that Southlake serves are among the fastest-growing in

the province, and without any material acute care expansion in over 20 years, Southlake has become an epicentre of hallway healthcare in Ontario,” said the hospital. “When faced with these challenges, Southlake’s communities were clear – increase access to high-quality care closer to home.

“Anchored by its Davis Drive site and existing community-based locations, Southlake will work with partners to establish additional footholds across the municipalities it serves to tackle hallway healthcare by developing a Distributed Health Network. Key to this will be the creation of a second hospital site and the redevelopment of the Davis Drive campus. Southlake will also expand beyond its walls altogether, with a focus on virtual care and by leveraging learnings from its

successful Southlake@home program.”

Heading in the direction of a Distributed Health Network will help Southlake improve outcomes and experiences for patients, families and caregivers.

They say it is a “new way to organize and deliver care” across a broad geographic catchment area, spreading services throughout its municipalities.

Once a new site is chosen, acute hospital-based care will be delivered from the redeveloped Davis Drive site and at its new hospital, wherever it ends up being built.

Services that don’t require a hospital visit will be delivered at “Advanced Care Campuses”, which they say will help reduce hallway healthcare.

Continued on Page 11

adopt a cat





Timbit is our sweet and hilarious girl! We have no idea why she’s still here. She can be found doing something silly, or lounging on her throne. She loves pets, to play, and is great with other cats.

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SPORTS

NEW TECUMSETH TIMES

Hornets win at home over second-place Orillia Terriers

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Alliston Hornets delivered a huge win on home ice at the New Tecumseth Recreation Centre when they dispatched the second-place Orillia Terriers in their first home game in almost a month on Friday, Nov. 29.

It was a 2-0 game in the first period when Aaron McGuirk scored at 4:30 into the period followed by a second goal from Duncan Grube at the midway mark in the frame.

Ben Smith scored at 7:38 into the second period to give the Hornets a 3-0 lead.

That was followed by a goal from Jax Bellwood at 14:36 into the period.

It was a 5-0 game when Nick Lamont scored at 11:17 into the final period.

The Terriers avoided the shut-out when they scored at 12:53 into the third period.

The final was a 5-1 Hornets win.

Alliston is still undefeated after 19 times on the ice this year and they show no signs of taking it easy and coasting on that record. They are the only undefeated team in the entire 62-team Provincial Junior Hockey League.

“I think if Seth (goalie Ronan) didn’t help us out a couple of times, the game would have been closer,” said Hornets head coach Jacob Bauchman after Friday’s game. “We were sloppy at times, but that’s because of our schedule. We play weak teams game after game, then bam, we play Orillia and Stayner. The big challenge for us is making sure we play against Orillia and Stayner the same way we play everyone else. Orillia is weak in the back end, they’re very powerful up front, but we have guys that can shut



STAYING ON TOP – The Alliston Hornets take on the Orillia Terriers at the New Tecumseth Recreation Centre on Friday, Nov. 29. The Hornets left the ice with a 5-1 win and remain undefeated for the season. They are in first place in the North Carruthers Division of the Provincial Junior Hockey League. **BRIAN LOCKHART PHOTO**

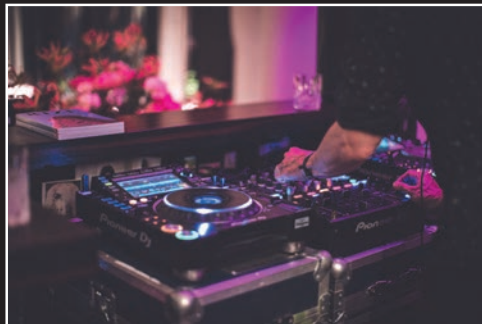
them down. We can match their offensive guys with our ‘D’, but they can’t match our forwards. Our confidence is definitely very high. We hold the guys to a really high stan-

dard – and they’re meeting it. Our dressing room is so tight, the guys are in a good mood. When we finished last year we won 16 regular season games in a row. We haven’t lost a

regular season game in 35 games.”

The Hornets will be back on home ice on Friday, Dec. 6, to host the Huntsville Otters. Game time is 7:30 p.m.

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Tottenham Railers win one, lose one

BY BRIAN LOCKHART
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

It was a mixed weekend for the Tottenham Railers that saw them earn a single point from an overtime loss to the Niagara Predators before taking a home-ice win over the St. George Ravens.

They travelled to Niagara-on-the-Lake for the second Friday in a row on Nov. 29 and put in a disjointed performance in a match littered with penalties.

Both teams traded the lead and the game went into overtime after the Railers tied it 5-5. It was an entertaining three-on-three OT with the Predators scoring with five seconds left on the clock.

The Railers brought home a single point for the OT loss.

Aimy Royer scored two goals and added two assists for a four-point night.

On Saturday, Nov. 30, the St. George Ravens came to town. The Railers jumped to an early lead and were up 4-1 after the first period.

Despite trading goals, the Railers’ lead proved to be enough and they left the ice

with a comfortable 6-3 win in one of their best performances of the year.

Bruno Parente scored one and added five helpers to become the Railers’ all-time leading assists and points scorer with 31 assists and 50 points.

December will be a make-or-break month for the Railers.

On Tuesday, Dec. 3, and Wednesday, Dec. 4, the Greater Metro Hockey League is hosting its College Showcase in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The games played will go toward the points standings.

The Railers had games against the two top teams in the North Conference against Wasaga River Dragons and the Bradford Rattlers – results were not available at press time.

The Railers will be back on home ice at the Tottenham Community Centre on Saturday, Dec. 7, to host the Bradford Rattlers with a 7:30 p.m. start.

Following a successful evening collecting food for the Our Town Food Bank in Tottenham, the team will continue collecting for this game.

Continued from Page 4

Brock's Banter: Tradition vs. Tradition

For everyone with friends and family flung further afield than the GTA dependent on sending out cards and packages this season, not only to spread holiday cheer but maintain valued traditions, I hope you've found workarounds as the strike has bulldozed through some key holiday dates.

Canada Post provides a valuable and largely egalitarian service to this country, and was a unifying force in our nationhood since Canada's first postage stamps were printed in the 1850s. As such, their employees, whether they are postal clerks, sorters, or carriers, have been called upon to continue their work, often in challenging conditions.

We all, of course, have the stereotype in

our heads of postal carriers being chased away from on-porch mailboxes by the dog of the house, but as online shopping continues to ramp up, they're laden-down now more than ever and called upon to do so much more than they had been before.

At the same time, as far as I can see, Canada Post hasn't done all they can to stay competitive.

They might be a Crown Corporation, which has made them ubiquitous, but they have never had a complete monopoly on how documents and parcels are delivered in this country.

At the start of the global pandemic, when the vast majority of us pivoted towards online commerce, whether supporting local

businesses via their websites when they were unable to open their doors, or doubling down on our argued reliance on the usual online subjects who had the infrastructure in place to keep their goods moving without a blip, I thought this would be Canada Post's time to shine.

Instead of taking advantage of this opportunity to make further inroads into the courier market, they instead posted significant losses, continuing a trend from long before the pandemic, and answered the call by raising prices for their products and services, rather than taking the opportunity to position themselves a cost-effective service for individuals and businesses alike.

At press time this week, there was still no

resolution on the labour dispute, leaving the United States Postal Service to announce Monday it was no longer accepting Canada-bound mail until the strike was over, throwing water on an already damp week for cross-border trade, not to mention holiday cheer.

One can only hope the resolution is swift and that the new year brings the service some much-needed soul searching.

That being said, if you're still hoping to receive a gift sent weeks ago from a family member in States or for a friend in Vancouver to receive your masterpiece of a Christmas letter, nobody is going to begrudge you opening up some advent calendar doors a few days early to soothe the worrying soul!

Continued from Page 9

Southlake Regional Health Centre changes name for 100th anniversary

"Southlake has successfully provided services from both the hospital and various community-based locations across northern York Region and southern Simcoe County for quite some time," said Paul Woods, MD, President and CEO, Southlake Health.

"With our new strategy, we are doubling down on this approach by embracing an excit-

ing new vision for the future of healthcare.

"The modern hospital is much more than a building – it is a constellation of expertise that must adapt to patients' changing needs and the evolving healthcare landscape. By shifting away from traditional thinking that sees hospitals as simple bricks and mortar facilities, we can better appreciate their true value — harnessing the collective exper-

tise, compassion, and experience of our people to deliver care in new and flexible ways."

Added Jennifer Ritter, President & CEO of the Southlake Health Foundation: "With the support of our communities, Southlake has been able to provide leading edge care, close to home for 100 years, but this next chapter will require all of us

to have transformational philanthropy in our sights – inspiring some of the most significant investments in our history. We have achieved incredible things together, and this new plan will put us on a path to achieve an extraordinary legacy of care for our communities."

For more on the future of Southlake Health, visit www.southlake.ca/strategy.

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Four people face drug charges after traffic stop in New Tecumseth

Four people have been charged with several drug related offences after a traffic stop in New Tecumseth.

Officers from the Nottawasaga Ontario Provincial Police's Crime Reduction Unit conducted a traffic stop on a passenger vehicle with an obstructed rear plate, travelling south bound on 8th Ave. in New Tecumseth on Nov. 29, at approximately 2:22 p.m.

The driver was identified and known to police as a suspended driver. The driver was arrested for this offence and police conducted searches.

While officers on scene continued their investigation, they were engaged with three other occupants in the vehicle. While iden-

tifying each occupant, the officers observed a zip lock baggie containing a white powdery substance believed to be cocaine.

The vehicle was seized as proceeds of crime and upon completion of the investigation, officers seized the suspected cocaine, \$1,605 in cash, and 2 cellphones as evidence to the offence of trafficking.

All parties were arrested and face charges. Darryl Berdan, 40, of Alliston, was charged with:

- Fail to Comply with Probation Order - three counts
- Unauthorized Possession of Weapon
- Possession of a Schedule I substance for the purpose of Trafficking - Cocaine
- Obstruct plate

• Driving while under suspension
Berdan was held for a bail hearing and is to re-appear in court on Dec. 2.

Joline Stewart, 41, from Adjala-Tosorontio, was charged with:

- Possession of a Schedule I Substance - Cocaine
- Trafficking in Schedule I substance - Cocaine

Stewart was released on Form 10 with a future court date of Jan. 2, 2024.

Jeffery Hollingshead, 47, of Alliston, was charged with:

- Possession of a Schedule I Substance - Cocaine
- Trafficking in Schedule I substance - Cocaine

Hollingshead was released on Form 10 with a future court date of Jan. 2, 2024.

Daniel Norrie, 44, of Alliston, was charged with:

- Possession of a Schedule I Substance - Cocaine
- Trafficking in Schedule I substance - Cocaine

Norrie was released on Form 10 with a future court date of Jan. 2, 2024.

None of the listed charges have been proven in court.

If you have any information regarding a criminal offence please contact the OPP or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or you can submit your information online anonymously at ontariocrimestoppers.ca.

Two arrested in connection to assault of municipal law enforcement officer

Officers from the Caledon Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) have arrested a second suspect in relation to the assault of a municipal law enforcement officer. Two individuals have now been charged.

On Nov. 24, shortly after 2 a.m., Caledon OPP responded to an assault on Fallview

Circle, in the community of Southfields Village. A Town of Caledon Municipal Law Enforcement Officer, in the course of their duties, was assaulted by a group of individuals. The officer was transported to hospital and the injuries were later deemed to be minor.

On Nov. 28, members of the Caledon

OPP Major Crime Unit located and arrested one suspect in relation to the assault. A second suspect was arrested on Nov. 29. The identity of a third remains unknown.

As a result, Avhijeet Araich, 33, of Brampton, and Japdeep BRAR, 26, of Caledon, have both been charged with assault peace officer - cause bodily harm.

Both accused are being held for a Bail Hearing at the Ontario Court of Justice in Orangeville on Nov. 29, 2024.

The investigation remains ongoing with the assistance of the Caledon OPP Major Crime Unit and the Regional Support Team.

None of the listed charges have been proven in court.

Two suspects sought in perfume thefts from Shoppers Drug Mart

The Dufferin Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is looking to identify two suspects in the theft of perfume sets at Shoppers Drug Mart on First Street in the Town of Orangeville.

On Nov. 24, at approximately 7:29 p.m., a lone female suspect was seen in the perfume aisle testing various fragrances. Later, CCTV footage showed her placing a Gucci perfume set in her bag before leaving the store.

On Nov. 25, at approximately 12:03 p.m., a lone female suspect was seen in the per-

fume aisle browsing various fragrances. Later, CCTV footage showed her placing a Gucci perfume set in her bag before leaving the store.

The suspects in both incidents are described as follows:



Suspect 1

- White female with a tanned complexion
- Approximately 20 years old
- Medium build
- Long brown hair
- Wearing all black clothing, including a black tote bag

Suspect 2

- White female, approximately 35-40 years old
- Medium build

- Blonde hair with pink streaks
- Wearing a black jacket with white stripes, ripped blue jeans, and glasses at the time of the incident

Officers are seeking the assistance of the public to identify the suspect.

If you have information about suspected unlawful activity, please contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or Crime Stoppers to remain anonymous at 1-800-822-8477 (TIPS) or www.crimestoppersdm.com.

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There is a large selection of Canadian pieces, particularly from Ontario. There are bottles from across the United States, particularly from New York & Pennsylvania. The international pieces represent the UK, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, France, Hungary and the Netherlands. Notable brands include Coca-Cola, Nehi, Orange Crush, Zeitz, 7-Up and Saratoga. This is a must-see auction for enthusiasts and collectors alike!

Preview: Dec 13th, 10a-4p, or call for an appointment on another day. Preview & Pickup will be at our Home Office Base, 438280 4th Line, Melancthon (North of Shelburne).

Features: Tulip Bott Co. - Emerald Green Embossed Tulip; Saskatoon Bottling Works - Brown Acid-Etched; The Tune Bottling Co. - Lime Green Blown Glass Acid-Etched; Propriete de la Brasserie du Faubourg Lillers - Rosaline Marquise Acid-Etched; C. H. Norton - Azur Blue Blown Glass Acid-Etched; Schweppes Limited - Clear Acid-Etched Vauxhall w/ Paper Label - Porcelain Lined 30oz Syphon Bottle; Fabrique d'Eaux Gazeuses et Sirops - Yellow Uranium/Ouraline Fluted Acid-Etched; Coca-Cola Bottling Company - Cobalt Blue Acid-Etched Tahiti/Portello - 26oz Seltzer Bottle and more!

Lots begin closing at 5pm on Dec 13th. If you're interested in absentee bids, give us a call at 519-288-2228.



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612 AUCTIONS/FLEA MARKETS

REMINDER

LIVE AUCTION SALE for Thomas Hyatt Saturday December 7, 10am 6117 8th Line, Hillsburgh (Erin), ON

From the town of Hillsburgh come north on Trafalgar Rd (Reg Rd 25/Cty Rd 24) to the Erin/East Garafraxa Townline. Turn east and go 1.4km to 8th Line. Then south 1km to sale on east side of road. OR from Hwy 109 (at Waldemar) come south on Cty Rd 24 (Regional Rd 25) for 10km to East Garafraxa/Erin Townline. Turn east and go 1.4km to 8th Line. Turn south and come 1 km to sale on East side of road.

**** SALE TO BE HELD IN HEATED SHOP****

Vehicles (all sold as is): 1967 Rolls Royce Silver Shadow sedan, 4 dr, 107K mi; 1979 Lincoln Continental Mark 5 coupe, cloth int, 400 V8; 1999 Mercedes SLK 450, 2 dr, hard top; 1999 Mercedes CLK 430 convertible, black, leather, 295K km; Mitsubishi Fuso cube van, 8'x16' box, diesel, lift gate; 2015 Dodge Outdoorsman 4x4 truck, Eco-diesel, 4 dr, white, cloth int, 334K km; 1999 Dodge Ram 3500 Cummins dually, 12ft flatbed, 74K km, white; 2006 Ford F450 diesel ambulance, converted to camper. **Tractor:** MF 240 tractor, single remote, R: 13.6-28, 794hrs, very nice; **Trailers:** 2013 5th wheel flatbed trailer, 14000lbs, ramps, tandem, 22'x8'; 2014 Wildwood 281 XLite 30ft travel trailer; (3)storage trailers 2-46', 1-40'; 5'x7' landscape trailer, mesh floor & rear ramp; steel 3'x5' trailer. **RTVs/ATVs/Snowmobiles/Golf Cart, +Acc:** Kubota 1100 RTV, diesel, 4x4, 400hrs, cab, heat, A/C, hydr dump; JD 825i 4x4 Gator, hydr dump; Toro Workman MDX, hydr dump; 2005 Skidoo Rotax 1000 SDI, 3572 mi; 2002 Skidoo Legend Rotax 600, 12,000km; 1977 Skidoo Elan 250; MFC50 4-wheeler; Golf cart, Yamaha gas motor, bench seat, box; ATV snowblade; Can-AM 6ft snowblade for side-by-side. **Lawnmowers:** JD 3325 reel mower; JD 1600 diesel mower 11'cut; JD lawnmower for parts; Kubota T1770 riding lawnmower, 17hp, 48" cut. **Mach/Equip/Accs:** Hyster 50 propane forklift; (2) wood hay wagons; front mount skidsteer 6ft bushog, hydr drive; Sullair 425 diesel compressor on trailer, JD engine; skidsteer mount tree shear; JD 54" riding mower snowblade; mounting harness; payload snowblade. **Shop/Farm Rel:** (NIB-new in box): 25'x50'x16'h Quonset hut-brand new (has all parts); 1100 sq ft mezzanine with galvanized flooring; Generac generators-2000 & G8000; B&S TMG-GWC5 woodchipper, 420cc engine; gas hedge trimmers (Stihl HS45, Echo HC150); Echo gas leaf blower; (4)Dri-Eaz turbo dryers; tool box; hardware; qty transfer hose; stone; paving slabs; paving bricks; uncut firewood; asst lumber & building supplies; sandblasting cabinet -NIB; propane heaters; (2)Saracco ind size sandblasters; KEW 0940C elec pressure washer; asst hand/power tools; HD ext cords; Honda EB10000 generator, 450hrs; chainsaws-Husqvarna, Stihl; Tomcat GTX 30D floor sweeper; John Bean brake lathe FMC 601PF; fuel tank with elec pump; qty ladders; (90) 4x5 round bales first cut hay. **Misc/Furn:** Pool table, wood bed, 5'x8'; golf clubs(R); chairs; wood table; dressers; cooler for golf cart; canoes- 2-Evergreen,1-Sportspal; (4) hitching posts from Windsor Raceway.

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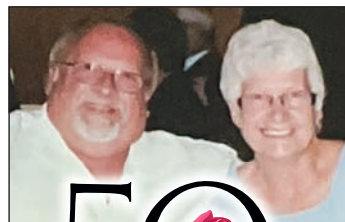
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Beatty: Irene Hope

Peacefully on November 25, 2024 at Royal Victoria Health Centre, Barrie. Irene (Thorne) at the age of 93 years, beloved wife of the late Sydney Beatty. Loving mother of Craig Beatty (Marjorie Tepina), Paula Beatty (Paul Burley) and the late Keith Beatty. Deeply loved grandmother of Sierra (Christian), Alyssa, Ryan (Sarah), and Emily. Irene was predeceased by her brother Robert. Forever in the hearts of the extended family, and friends.

The family will receive friends at Rod Abrams Funeral Home, 1666 Tottenham Road, Tottenham 905-936-3477, on Saturday, January 4, 2025 from 10:30 am until time of Memorial Service in the Chapel at 11:30 am. Interment at Alliston Union Cemetery. For those who wish donations in memory of Irene can be made to Canadian Cancer Society. Online condolences and memories can be made to www.RodAbramsFuneralHome.com.

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Together, we can make a difference.

Thank You
 FOR SUPPORTING A LOCAL BUSINESS

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37 Young Street, Alliston 705-435-1405

M&M FOOD MARKET Festive Savings

Pub Party Pack
32 PIECES 576 g
SAVE \$5 each

Asian Party Pack
38-46 PIECES 632 g
SAVE \$5 each

Shrimp Ring
42-48 SHRIMP 454 g
SAVE \$9

Thai Party Pack
24 PIECES 430 g
Sauce included
SAVE \$5 each

Indian Party Pack
32 PIECES 740 g
Sauce included
SAVE \$5 each

LOWEST PRICE of the season GUARANTEED

INCREDIBLE PRICE 12.99 each

Cocktail Sauce included

SAVE \$2
Sausage Rolls
26-28 PIECES 500 g
LOWEST PRICE of the season GUARANTEED

9.99 each

SAVE \$3
Pizza Rolls
8 PIECES 460 g
Choose from 2 varieties.

Spanakopita
12 PIECES 340 g
SAVE \$1 each

Mini Quiche
16 PIECES 340 g
Classic French Style
Florentine

Strawberry Shortcake

Brownie Chunk Cream Cake

SAVE \$4
19.99
TOO TALL Cakes
865 g - 1 kg
Choose from 7 varieties.

Lasagna
SAVE \$2

Supreme Homestyle Lasagna
SAVE \$5 each

Homestyle Shepherd's Pie
SAVE \$7

Cabbage Rolls

24.99 each

4 lb ENTRÉES 1.81 kg

SAVE \$5 each

SERVE 6-8

INCREDIBLE PRICE 27.99

SAVE \$12
Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breasts
8-12 BREASTS 1.36 kg/3 lb
Other size available, 4-6 BREASTS 680 g/1.5 lb
\$15.99 SAVE \$7

BUY 1, GET 1 50% OFF

Cheese Sticks
13-21 PIECES 454 g

MIX AND MATCH

Mozzarella
Jalapeno

SAVE \$7.50
Regular price 14.99

DESSERTS **SAVE \$3**

10.99
Cheesecake Bites
15 PIECES 300 g
Also available, Nanaimo Bites 15 PIECES 300 g
\$10.99 SAVE \$3

13.99
Gourmet Brownie Variety Pack
12 PIECES 480 g
WHILE QUANTITIES LAST

15.99
Nanaimo Bars 850 g

24.99
Yule Logs 760 g
LIMITED TIME ONLY

19.99 each **save \$3**

Walnut Raisin Tart Bars 850 g

Chocolate Chunk Cream Bars 850 g

Lemonicious™ Lemon Squares 850 g

Chocolate Lovers Variety Pack 850 g

Dessert Bar Variety Pack 675 g

APPETIZERS

SAVE \$3 each
Fried Battered Mushrooms 300 g

SAVE \$2
Mini Vegetable Spring Rolls 16 PIECES 384 g

SALE
Chicken Spring Rolls 6 PIECES 432 g

SAVE \$2
Fried Battered Pickles 10-12 PIECES 390 g

SALE
Vegetable Egg Rolls 10 PIECES 570 g

9.99 each

SAVE \$3 each
Cream Cheese Stuffed Jalapeños 10-13 PIECES 360 g

SAVE \$2
Cauliflower Bites 450 g

Hot Honey Cheese Bites 14 PIECES 280 g

Artichoke Mac & Cheese Bites 14 PIECES 280 g

SALE
Crispy Everything Cream Cheese Bites 14 PIECES 280 g

Mini Franks in Pastry 15 PIECES 279 g

SAVE \$3 each
Cream Cheese and Cheddar Stuffed Jalapeños 10-13 PIECES 360 g

HOLIDAY CLASSICS

SAVE \$4
24.99
Turkey Breast 875 g

11.99
Apple Butter Pork Tenderloin 400 g

SAVE \$3 each

10.99
Stuffed Potatoes 4 PIECES 560 g

8.99
Gourmet Stuffed Potatoes 900 g

14.99
Supreme Scalloped Potatoes 907 g
Other size available, 227 g \$4.99 **SALE**

SAVE \$2
10.99
Homestyle Mashed Potatoes 650 g

FESTIVE SEAFOOD

9.99
Lobster Mac & Cheese Bites 14 PIECES 252 g
SAVE \$4 each

SALE
Lobster Stuffed Shrimp Caps 12 PIECES 276 g
15.99 each

17.99
Crispy Torpedo Shrimp 10 PIECES 320 g
LIMITED TIME ONLY

Shrimp Tempura 13-15 PIECES 340 g
SAVE \$2

12.99 each

SALE
Popcorn Shrimp 300 g
SAVE \$2

Stuffed Sweet 'n Spicy Shrimp 10 PIECES 320 g

SAVE \$3 each

Jumbo Coconut Shrimp 16-19 SHRIMP 340 g

ALL PRICES IN EFFECT THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5 TO WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2024 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

QR code

To view the full flyer, scan the QR code or go to mmfoodmarket.com

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THE HOLIDAYS ARE CLOSER THAN YOU THINK.

LOWEST PRICE of the season GUARANTEED

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When you see this icon, rest assured it will be our best pricing of the holiday season on that item.