



The Blue Mountains Fire Department Reminds Public to be Prepared this Winter

The Town of The Blue Mountains Fire Department would like to remind the public to be prepared for a winter emergency with a plan and supplies available to keep themselves safe during the winter months. Steps you can take to ensure you are prepared this winter season include:

Keep an Emergency Preparedness Kit

Households are encouraged to build an emergency preparedness kit in case of a power outage or winter conditions that prevent people from being able to leave their homes. Kits should include items like a flashlight, water and non-perishable food to last for at least three days.

Visit Ontario.ca/BePrepared for a comprehensive list of what can be part of your household's kit.



Get Ready for Winter Driving

Be prepared for winter driving and always keep a winter survival kit in your car. Kits should include a blanket, warm clothing like gloves, hats and sweaters, a phone charger, candles, a shovel, jumper cables and water. Additionally, it is recommended to keep your fuel tank at least half full to help reduce moisture in the fuel system and add weight to the vehicle. Make sure you have an ice-scraper and washer fluid that works at temperatures as low as -40oC.

Road Safety

The Blue Mountains Fire Department encourages all travellers to drive according to road conditions and to avoid unnecessary travel if conditions deteriorate. If you are travelling, leave early to give yourself extra time, and plan your travel by using Ontario 511 to check road status, cameras, weather, and [Track My Plow](#) to find out where plows are on provincial highways.

Seniors Matters - JANUARY 11TH, L.E. SHORE LIBRARY

Elder Abuse Prevention Grey Bruce (EAPGB) is working to create a new system for preventing abuse of older adults and responding supportively to situations of abuse.

They want to hear from seniors and other residents across both counties. What do YOU think is needed to prevent abuse of older adults? WHERE would you get help if you knew about abuse happening? This is the kind of information that will help create a better system of supports.

On January 11th, Amber Jackson from EAPGB will be in The Blue Mountains to hear from our community. Everyone is welcome to attend. It's at L. E. Shore Library, from 11:30 am. to 2 p.m. (A light lunch will be included.) There will be a discussion and focus group and a presentation. For more information and to register, phone 519 599 2577, ext. 126 or e-mail seniors@bvo.ca



THE HINGE of HUMANITY

We gaze through the portal of '24 as calendar's door yields to vistas new,
Clunk and click mark the closing of the year of '23, Anno Domini.

Who has not stooped for one lasting second to see that final flutter,
Muttering, "Let us escape from those 23 claws", clutching embers of hope?

Upon this door though, this turnstile of year's opening and closing,
We cast inspection, fingering door and frame, handle, tumbler, and spindle;
Amazed by one dawn, one revelation,
one denouement, one inspiration.....
We Are The Hinges!

A hinge mounted firm and true is our vocation,
fastened to integrity's post,
Our style is quiet and humble; we place the door to latch with gentle ease.

We know when to open to new, to close to old,
to embrace, to abandon,
Carry the weight of duty and promise, shut out the demons of rage and envy.

Yet for all the world to see, one hinge to the other pins dependence,
No hierarchy, no separation, no privilege,
only the mutual lubricant of humanity.
May communities and nations witness people as hinges of common goals,
Hinges to open vistas unimaginable -
glows of confidence, and rows of hope.

We are The Hinges of '24.

JEREMY WENTWORTH-STANLEY
jeremy@respectonomics.com

I NEED A KIDNEY

**I HAVE CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE
IF YOU ARE ABLE TO DONATE A KIDNEY
OR WISH MORE INFO, PLEASE CALL
Cor 519-538-0232**

Trivia Answers

1. Answer: b
2. Answer: a
3. Answer: c
4. Answer: b An empty suitcase to guarantee at least one traveling adventure in the New Year.
5. Answer: c Pouring water over someone symbolizes washing away bad luck

SEWING CLASSES

are being offered beginning Tuesday, February 13, for 10 weeks. Classes are free.
Located at First Baptist Church, Thornbury.
Please use the Alice Street entrance.
For information call:
Maryann @ 519 599 2680 or Pat @ 519 538 0020.

BID EUCHRE

Wednesday & Thursday 12:50-3:30pm; \$2.00 per day
Small Hall, Beaver Valley Community Centre
Lessons Available - Bev 705-507-0563 or Dorothy 519-599-5044

DROP-IN BRIDGE

MONDAY 1PM-3PM; \$2.00 PER PERSON
St. George's Anglican Church, Clarksburg

Enjoy walking year round at the Beaver Valley Community Centre.

Monday and Thursday from 9-11 am; no pre-registration or fee.
Come whatever time you wish between 9-11 am.
Walking with poles (with rubber feet) and walkers is allowed.

ST. JAMES FAIRMOUNT ANGLICAN CHURCH

196759 Grey Rd 7 corner of Grey Rd 7 & Grey Rd 40
1st & 3rd Sunday 9am - Holy Eucharist BCP
2nd & 4th Sunday 9am - Morning Prayer BCP
5th Sunday 4pm - Evensong BCP & Potluck Supper
Rector Jeff Kischak, 519-770-7979



E-NEWSLETTER - Use the subscribe form on our website to receive the weekly E-newsletter. www.bluemountainsreview.ca

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER This edition is mailed to residents in The Blue Mountains the first week of each month

DONATE - by e-transfer to info@visitblue.ca or by cheque to Riverside Press, Box 387, Thornbury, N0H 2P0

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: We ask that letters be no longer than 250 words, and adhere to standards of fairness, accuracy, legality and civility. Beyond that, we select letters on the basis of timeliness, relevance and diversity and reserve the right to not publish.

ARTICLES are from media releases or those that are submitted acknowledge the author.

Publisher Linda Wykes, printed by Riverside Press. Your events, stories and photos of interest to our community can be emailed to info@visitblue.ca for inclusion in the newsletter by each Friday. Advertising rates available on the website or call 519-599-3345



Charity Funding

Applications are now being accepted for The Blue Mountain Village Foundation (BMVF) Winter 2023/24 Grant Funding Program. Non-profit organizations and community groups are encouraged to apply for funding before the application deadline on January 26, 2024.

The BMVF awards grants to charitable organizations in the South Georgian Bay Region (including Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, Stayner, The Blue Mountains, Meaford, Duntroon, Singhampton, Kimberley & Creemore) whose programs & activities address social gaps in our community. Through community engagement & advocacy, program delivery, and fundraising, the BMVF supports areas of health, education, the arts, the environment, family support, recreation and more. Support is given through cash grants to provide funding for specific projects that meet the Foundation's mandate and criteria. Operational costs or salaries are not considered. Once the application review is complete, the Selection Committee will make recommendations to the Foundation's Board of Directors for final approval.

Winter 2023/24 Grant Funding Let's Bring Our Communities Together!

Criteria and guidelines for submissions have been developed to reflect the most pressing needs identified in our community. The guidelines include the following:

Program Criteria:

- Programs must address gaps and provide solutions to the South Georgian Bay Community.
- \$15K available in funding and individual requests are not to exceed \$5000.
- Programs should be delivered between March 2024 & February 2025.
- Social gaps & solutions include:
 - **Senior Support:** To ensure our seniors receive the services they need for a fulfilling and comfortable life.
 - **Fight Against Hunger:** To help eradicate food insecurity and ensure that no one in our community goes hungry.
 - **Mental Health:** To bring increased awareness and resources to this critical issue of heightened mental health challenges.
 - **Domestic Abuse:** To address family problems such as domestic abuse, and programs which create safer and healthier environments.
 - **Access to Healthcare:** To ensure everyone has access to medical and healthcare support they need.
 - **Workforce Challenges:** To promote stable and sustainable livelihoods for all, tackling limited access to housing, skills development, and workforce challenges.
 - **Youth Empowerment:** To support youth in the community, providing opportunities for connection, growth, and development.
 - **Economic Empowerment:** To break down economic barriers for individuals and families, particularly in light of inflation and high cost of living in our community.
- All Basic Criteria outlined above (dates, programming timeline, one or more gaps/solutions identified) must be met for grant applications to be reviewed by the selection committee.
www.bluemountainvillage.ca/foundation/funding

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Enrollment Night

Wednesday Dec 20th was Enrollment Night for the 1st Thornbury Guide/Pathfinder Unit. Our theme this year was the "Guiding Light" of Girl Guides. The girls participated in a candle ceremony using their Guide Laws, then each was enrolled individually. Meetings resume Jan 10th, 2024. We are also open to new arrivals!

Pictured l-r Back: Lucy Kitchen, Charlotte Forder, Camille McKinnon
Front: Evelyn Devries, Julia Hands and Maya Parkal. Missing that evening were Molly Barclay, Harper Caswell & Pathfinder Michelle Kaminski. For info email fivews@rogers.com

Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corp.

The housing corporation held its AGM at the L.E. Shore Library on Dec. 14. The volunteer members of the board of directors stepped down from their positions. This left Mayor Matrosovs and Coun. McKinlay in their spots as municipal representatives on the board.

The Blue Mountains council had passed a resolution approving the appointment of five town staff members to the housing corporation's board of directors to run the operation temporarily. The town plans a revamp of the housing corporation's role and responsibilities over the next six months. The staff appointments are to end on June 30.

New Year Traditions Trivia

- In Scotland, Isle of Man and Northern England who is hoped to be the first person to enter your home.
 - a member of your family
 - a dark haired person
 - a person carrying a cross
- In Spain it is believed to bring good luck if you eat one _____ in time with each chime of the clock at midnight. Fill in the blank.
 - grapes
 - olives
 - cookie
- In Danish tradition people smash _____ against their neighbors doors to bring them good luck. Fill in the blank:
 - snow balls
 - pomegranates
 - plates and crockery
- In Columbia people run around the block with _____. Fill in the blank:
 - their family or friends
 - an empty suitcase
 - a bag of sweets to share
- In Thailand the Thai New Year is celebrated in April. To show respect and good wishes for the year ahead one does what ?
 - exchange a kiss
 - give a friend a flower
 - pour water over someone

answers on page 2

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THANK YOU!

FOR HELPING US CELEBRATE 40 YEARS IN 2023,
AND FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

[f](https://www.facebook.com/bvo.ca) 519-599-2577 | BVO.CA [i](https://www.instagram.com/bvo.ca)



**HAPPY
NEW YEAR
2024**



Warm wishes for a year filled
with peace, health &
happiness!

TERRY
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SIMCOE-GREY

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In Memoriam

MERVIN ALBERT 'MERV' HOXFORD

With a heavy heart we share the news that Mervin Hoxford passed, at the age of 90, on the morning of December 6, 2023.

Merv was born in Toronto on October 7, 1933 to the late Mona and Fred Hoxford. He is survived by his adored daughter, Emily Hoxford (Joshua Gross) and his beloved granddogs Finnegan and Winston and his grandcat Boomer, as well as his brother Gerry (Tilly) and brother-in-law Norman Yorston. He was preceded in death by his brother Norman Hoxford (Betty Ann) and sister Gloria Yorston. He will be greatly missed by his numerous nieces and nephews, who he cared deeply for.

Merv graduated from Danforth Tech and worked, lived and played with an extensive group of family and friends in Toronto before relocating in the 70s to the Village of Clarksburg where he took a job at the Collingwood Shipyards. This began a life he loved in a community he cherished. Before retiring, he found his favourite job, as a liftie on the Silver Bullet at Blue Mountain.

He enchanted the world with his gentle spirit, sense of humor and immense kindness. He built a life centered around enjoying the simple pleasures, like reading, a good crossword or sudoku, long walks, time spent with close friends and neighbours, skiing, golf, a regular card game with his long-time buddies or catching a Leafs, Blue Jays, or Argos game on TV.

In remembering Mervin, we celebrate a life well lived, filled with love, laughter and adventure. As a loyal friend and father he will be deeply missed by those lucky enough to have been loved by him.

A celebration with family and close friends will be held at a later date. If you'd like to express your sympathy, in lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to a charity that benefits animals or nature. Or simply share a memory aloud of Merv with your family and friends.

Private family arrangements have been entrusted to the Ferguson Funeral Home, 48 Boucher St. E., Meaford, ON N4L 1B9.

www.fergusonfuneralhomes.ca



ALMA OLIVE 'JEAN' VAIL

February 7, 1939 – December 20, 2023

Jean Vail, formerly of Collingwood Township, Jean passed away peacefully surrounded by loved ones at the Meaford General Hospital on Wednesday, December 20, 2023 in her 85th year.

Born in Collingwood, the only sibling to be born in a hospital of 14 children, Jean was the youngest daughter of the late Norman & Annie Weatherall. She was predeceased by her husband of 50 years Lorne Vail (February 19, 2007).

Jean was the loving mother of Don (Evonne), Brad (Janice), Brian (Lynn) and Kevin (Theresa). She was predeceased by her son Dennis and will be remembered by his partner Cathy Robertson. Jean was the much-loved Gramma of Jason (Lindsey), Ryan (Bryanna), Rebecca (Austin), Travis, Gavin, James (Anik), Sarah, Erin (Matt), Andrew and proud great-Gramma of Ainsley & Aubrey; Violet, Bryson & Sayge; Brooke & Wesley, and Wade & Everett.

She is survived by her sister Winnifred Bowins (late Lloyd) and her brother Al (Alberta), and sister-in-law Leora (late Cliff Blacklock and Joe Boyd).

Jean was predeceased by her siblings Norval (Dolsie), Dalton (Fern), Merle Brooks (Doug), Lorne (Joyce), Stanley (Dorothy), Wilbert (Helen & Suzanne), Mabel Bowen (Bill), Bessie Binns (Mike), and Lorne's siblings Doris McGowan (Keith), Jack Vail (Naomi), Leighton Vail (Freda) and will be remembered as a special aunt to her many nieces and nephews and their families.

She was fiercely independent and lived at home until she was unable. Jean loved listening to her brother Al perform locally with his wife Alberta and loved attending "Sunday Jams" where she would listen to country music and enjoyed dancing.

Jean and Lorne raised their 5 children on their farm in Clarksburg which is still owned by family today. They would often attend the Fiddlefest, horse racing and loved to go to Casinos.

Thank you to Dr. Klages for her care, as well as Jean's homocare nurses Carrie and David and her PSW Jill and especially the staff at the Meaford Hospital for making her final days comfortable.

A funeral service will be conducted at the Meaford United Church on Thursday, December 28, 2023 at 11:00 a.m., with visiting the hour prior to service. Private service of committal and interment at Lakeview Cemetery in Meaford.

As your expression of sympathy, donations to the Canadian Kidney Foundation or the Meaford Hospital Foundation would be appreciated and may be made through the Ferguson Funeral Home, 48 Boucher St. E., Meaford, ON N4L 1B9 to whom arrangements have been entrusted. www.fergusonfuneralhomes.ca



PAULINE JASTAK

April 16, 1927 – December 29, 2023

It is with heavy hearts that the family of Pauline Jastak of Thornbury announces her passing at the Meaford Hospital on Friday, December 29, 2023 at the age of 96.

Pauline is now in the arms of her beloved husband, Bob (2011).

She is the much loved mum of Maria (Barry) of Cambridge, and Des of Meaford. Nan to Chris Jastak (Marlo) of Kingston and Ian Bethley (Genevieve) of Kitchener. Great-Nan to Cadence and Quinn Jastak of Kingston.

She will be dearly missed by family in England.

Pauline was predeceased by a sister and brother in England, as well as two sisters in Canada.

At the age of 86, Pauline decided to take art lessons and became quite successful, selling seven of her paintings. She also loved to knit, sew, crochet, and quilt.

At Pauline's request there will be no visitation or funeral service. Cremation has taken place.

As your expression of sympathy, donations to the Grey-Bruce Animal Shelter would be appreciated and may be made through the Ferguson Funeral Home, 48 Boucher St. E., Meaford, ON N4L 1B9 to whom arrangements have been entrusted.

www.fergusonfuneralhomes.ca



The Master Gardener's Corner

Things to do in your garden each month taken from the Ontario Master Gardener Calendar by John Hethrington, Past President, Master Gardeners of Ontario. For more information, or your copy of the 11" x 17" calendar of the full year's tips for a \$2 contribution + postage to Master Gardeners, call 519-599-5846, or send an e-mail to casacarolejohn@gmail.com.



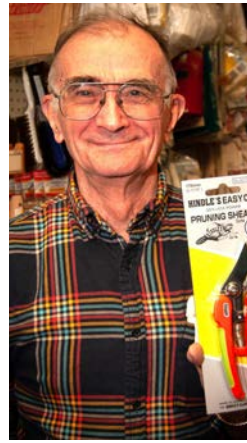
Things to do in, or for your garden in - January 2024

- Inspect house plants for white flies, spider mites and aphids.
- Apply insecticidal soap and spray with water.
- Inspect spring bulbs you may have stored or forgotten about. Discard soft or mouldy ones. Plant left over, not-yet-planted spring bulbs like daffs, tulips etc. in pots with good potting soil and a little bone meal. Water. Put the pots in an unheated garage or garden shed for 6 weeks. Take them inside in February or early March. You should get spring blooms in less than a month.
- The snow comes and goes. The January thaw will come again like clockwork. Before it comes mound any remaining snow over roses and tender perennials.
- DON'T THROW OUT YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE! Cut the branches off and place them over tender plants to catch the snow. It's the freeze/thaw cycle that kills the plants.
- Expand your personal knowledge through on-line courses, plus look online for seed and plant catalogues.
- Make several detailed lists; a) BIG Projects, b) Spring clean-up by bed, c) Regular maintenance, d) New plants to buy and c) Plants to divide and donate to the St. George's Plant Sale in early June (Date still to be set). Donate 15 or more perennials and get a Tax Receipts for the value your plants sell for! Call 519-599-5846 for more info.

- Google "Seed Catalogue Websites" and see hundreds of seed sources.
- Order flower and vegetable seeds. Decide which seeds should be started inside.
- If you can find them, try forcing amaryllis and paperwhite narcissus now for indoor winter bloom that will cheer you up.
- At the end of the month, start the slowest germinating seeds like begonias and geranium, also seeds for early spring bloom e.g., pansy, verbena, alyssum and dianthus.

The Markdale CO-OP, 1-519-986-2031, has a good supply of Triple-19 fertilizer still available at \$29.40 a bag. This is strong agricultural fertilizer to only put on your flower garden beds as soon as the snow is gone, but before plant growth starts, like in late March. It will fertilize your gardens all summer long. It's worth the drive to Markdale!

New Item For Hindle's Clarksbug Hardware



It was a lifetime achievement for James Hindle. An incredible tool with his name on it. These pruning shears have been personally tested by him for quality, durability and ease of use before he allowed the Japanese company to put his name on them. They are also ambidextrousness. I tried them, and I bought one immediately. *by Robert Burcher*



Register for a Seniors Centre Without Walls session:
Call BVO at 519-599-2577 Ext 126

To Participate in a session: Dial: 226-6820701
Enter the Passcode: 852340 then # Record your Name followed by # Wait to be admitted into the session.


Seniors Centre Without Walls

January 2024

Speaker Info	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Additions To Be Announced in the New Year	** REGISTER for In-Person events. seniors@bvo.ca or 519 599 2755, ext. 126.** NOTE: Thurs., Jan. 11, Elder Abuse Prevention Focus Group & Presentation, incl. light lunch (11:30 - 2:00) & Thursday, Jan. 25, Navigating Dementia's Dimensions (1:30 - 2:30)				
Ahimsa Gordon - Mindful Meditation Leader	1 HAPPY NEW YEARS!	2 2:00 pm Check-in & Chat 2:30 BINGO!	3 10:00 am Chair Exercise and Stretching	4 11:00 am Mindful Meditation Ahimsa Gordon	5
Amber Jackson, Grey Bruce Elder Abuse Prevention	8 2:00pm Check-in & Chat 2:30 BINGO!	9	10 10:00 am Chair Exercise and Stretching	** In Person ** 11 11:30-2:00 Grey Bruce Elder Abuse Prevention Info & Focus Group (light lunch included) LE Shore Library	12
Shannon Fry - Pharmacist/owner	15 2:00pm Check-in & Chat 2:30 BINGO!	16	17 10:00 am Chair Exercise and Stretching	18 11:00am Mindful Meditation Ahimsa Gordon	19 11:00 am Meet the Pharmacist -- Shannon Fry
Jennifer Armstrong, E.A. to Terry Dowdall, MP. Sandra Hong, Alzheimer Soc. Grey Bruce	22 2:00pm Check-in & Chat 2:30 BINGO!	23 11:00 Canadian Dental Care Plan Jennifer Armstrong (to be confirmed)	24 10:00 am Chair Exercise and Stretching	** In Person ** 25 1:30-2:30 Navigating Dementia's Dimensions: Understanding, Coping, Supporting - Sandra Hong LE Shore Library	26
	29 2:00pm Check-in & Chat 2:30 BINGO!		31 10:00 am Chair Exercise and Stretching		



TOWN NEWS & NOTICES

 (519) 599-3131

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 32 Mill St. Thornbury, ON

 www.thebluemountains.ca

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Town of The Blue Mountains Public Appointments to Accountability and Transparency Committee 2022-2026

The Town of The Blue Mountains is seeking applications from members of the public for appointment to the NEW Accountability and Transparency Committee.

The Committee appointment runs concurrent with the term of Council, being 2022-2026.

The Accountability and Transparency Committee consists of 5 members, 3 Council members, who have been appointed and 2 members of the public, which are currently being sought.

Applicants are encouraged to complete the Application Form and include a resume, cover letter or any other background information and any special qualifications or interest related to this Committee.

NOTE: Applicants shall be qualified electors within the Town of The Blue Mountains

All Applications should be submitted no later than **Friday January 19, 2024, at 1:00 pm** to:

Town of The Blue Mountains
Attention: Town Clerk
32 Mill Street
Thornbury, Ontario N0H 2P0
townclerk@thebluemountains.ca

Personal information provided by the applicant is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001 and will be used for the purpose of candidate selection. The Town of The Blue Mountains is an equal opportunity organization. Accommodation will be provided in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Town 2024 Proposed Budget now available for Public Input

The notice regarding the 2024 Proposed Town Budget has been updated to include additional comments from Deputy Mayor Peter Bordignon.

The 2024 Proposed Budget plans to provide essential services relied upon by residents, businesses and visitors while maintaining property taxes and user fees at a level beneficial to fostering growth, prosperity and community investment. A main focus of the 2024 Proposed Budget is to ensure the long-term financial stability of the Town through adequate transfers to asset management reserve for capital funding.

The 2024 Proposed Tax Rate increase is 9.58%. This represents an increase of \$207 to an approximate total of \$2,366 for the Town portion of annual property taxes. These numbers are based on the assessed value of an average home in The Blue Mountains as set by MPAC at \$555,000.

Deputy Mayor Peter Bordignon, Chair of Finance, provided his outlook on the budget: "The operating side of the 2024 Budget reflects in its expenses and revenues, after growth, a tax rate impact of 2.38%, which comes in line with Council direction." He adds: "When factoring in the staff recommended transfers to the asset management reserve funds, the required tax rate increase sits at 9.58%. During the Special Budget meetings in January, we will be looking for opportunities to mitigate or offset the difference of 7.2% outlined in the draft budget."

Also included in the budget is a proposed increase in water and wastewater user fees. These fees are paid directly by the users that are connected to Municipal water and wastewater services. For the average home in the Town, the chart below outlines the impact of the **Water and Wastewater User-Fee increase.**

2024 Impact

Water (180 m3)	\$23
Wastewater (180 m3)	\$20
Total Impact	\$43

The 2024 Proposed Budget also includes a \$80M capital budget to support key infrastructure projects throughout the Town. Projects include:

- Renovations of the Craigleith and Mill Street Sewage Pumping Stations and the Forcemain to the Thornbury Wastewater Treatment Plant (\$30.6M)
- Replacement of the Thornbury Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall (\$16M)
- Replacement of the Craigleith Fire Hall and renovate the current building for Operations and Community Services (\$13.3M)

Completing these projects will help ensure that the services delivered by the Town can continue to be delivered efficiently and effectively without service interruptions.

Provide Your Input

The 2024 Proposed Town Budget is now available for public review and input. The proposed budget includes the 2024 operating budget, a five-year capital budget, and proposed Fees and Charges. The purpose of the proposed budget is to serve as a starting point for budget discussions with Council and members of the public.

To review the 2024 Proposed Budget, please visit: www.thebluemountains.ca/budget

The budget will be reviewed and deliberated by Council at a series of special budget meetings scheduled for the following dates:

Monday, January 8, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. (if necessary)

The special budget meetings will be conducted in person and will be live-streamed, with a recording posted to the Town website following the meeting. Following review and direction from Council through these meetings, revisions to the budget may be made, and the updated draft budget will be posted to the Town website on Wednesday, February 7, 2024.

Following the release of the updated budget, the Town will hold a Public Meeting on Tuesday, March 12, 2024. The public meeting provides the opportunity for residents to address Council directly or to submit an email or letter that will be read aloud by the Town Clerk.

Following the public meeting, Town Staff will then bring a report to the Committee of the Whole on Monday, March 18, 2024, outlining the public's comments from the Public Meeting. Following this meeting, any further changes will be incorporated into the 2024 Budget for Council approval, which is expected to occur on Tuesday, April 2, 2024.

Residents are encouraged to participate and share feedback with Council throughout the budget process. To learn about how to participate at a meeting or how to provide comments, please contact the Town Clerk or visit www.thebluemountains.ca/participate

To learn more about the Town's annual budget process, including key dates for the 2024 Budget process, please visit:

www.thebluemountains.ca/budget



Exhibit Reception: Where We Live

Opening January 2024 at The Gallery at L.E. Shore! Ontario artists Karen Bowen, Wanda Haayen and Judy Scopes are pleased to share a collection of their artwork in a tri-artist exhibit, Where We Live.

Meet the artists at their open reception on Saturday, January 6! Drop in between 2-4pm at The Gallery to enjoy the open

bar, refreshments and gorgeous art.



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Grey County Council

Grey County Council met on December 14, 2023, in the Council Chamber and virtually on Zoom. Recordings of the meetings can be found on Grey County's YouTube Channel.

Committee of the Whole

Grey County is partnering in a significant **road improvement and expansion project** in the Town of The Blue Mountains on Grey Road 19 including an intersection at Grey Road 21 and Highway 26. Council supported a notice of motion from Councillor Matrosovs to continue communicating and collaborating with project partners (The Town of The Blue Mountains, the Ministry of Transportation and Simcoe County) to ensure this project addresses the evolving needs of the area including newer developments and active transportation.

Council heard a delegation from Tom Allwood on behalf of the **Multi-Municipal Energy Working Group** about battery energy storage systems. The Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) is looking to expand capacity and there are active battery storage proposals within Grey County. Mr. Allwood shared the group's concern about these facilities in rural areas, noting proposals would remove active farmland and municipal fire services are not prepared to deal with fires at battery storage facilities. The Working Group is advocating for municipalities to have a voice and the ability to decline or support projects proposed in their communities.

Grey County is forming a **budget subcommittee** of Council in 2024. This committee will work along staff through the year and make recommendations on the development of the County budget.

Council appointed members to subcommittees and task forces for the upcoming year.

Grey County developed a **Land Acknowledgement Policy** in 2021 to demonstrate respect for the history of Indigenous Peoples and their past and present contributions. Council voted to repeal this policy, which has become too prescriptive, and move forward with a less structured framework that will allow for more meaningful recognition and better reflects Grey County's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.

Council heard a summary of the **Community Improvement Plan Program**. This program contributes \$20,000 per municipality per year in support of local municipal Community Improvement Plan incentives. These incentives vary by municipality and may include surplus land grants, façade and property improvement grants, heritage property tax relief and more. Council voted to consider extending the program in the 2024 budget. It will be discussed as part of budget deliberations.

Council heard an update on the **surplus lands project** and supported options to explore selling or granting surplus County land to third-party developers to create affordable housing. The County will also consider selling or leasing public lands for market-rate housing and reinvesting the income into other affordable housing projects.

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Melody Fox
NURSE PRACTITIONER
RN, BScN, MSc, MN, FNP-C



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Ontario Unveils Plan to Build Modern Schools Faster

The Ontario government is introducing new measures to build modern schools faster that will cut construction timelines by nearly 50 per cent to meet the unprecedented pace of growth across the province. In Ontario, the average school construction timeline is 4-7 years, which comes from an obsolete capital process that has not been meaningfully overhauled since 2010-11.

For the first time, Ontario will ensure school boards are building schools in nearly half the amount of time it took before through a faster, transparent, accountable and clearer process that prioritizes shovel-ready projects.

School boards will follow a more stream-lined process to identify and dispose of unused property, generate more revenue to reinvest back in schools, create schools in mixed-use buildings like condominiums and use existing buildings in their communities.

Key reforms include:

- Prioritizing shovel-ready projects and enhanced accountability requirements as school boards provide realistic project costs and timelines.
- Strengthened accountability framework to reduce approval timelines and stronger project oversight with the introduction of project agreements that lay out key milestones and delivery timelines.
- Standardizing designs of new schools to reduce school board planning time and mitigate scheduling delays.
- Greater collaboration between school boards and municipalities to ensure planning and construction of schools is targeted to ongoing and future growth.
- Reducing red tape with streamlined approval and reporting requirements on new school builds.
- Effectively using space by supporting school boards in working together to operate schools in joint-use facilities between two or more boards within the same building, where appropriate, or as

shared-use sites where a school is part of a larger building with multiple users, such as a school within a mixed-use condominium.

- Identifying and disposing of unused surplus school board property at fair market value, first considering local school board pupil accommodation needs and then provincial priorities such as long-term care and affordable housing before being sold by school boards on the open market. School boards will continue to reinvest proceeds of disposition back into their school facilities.

These measures have been incorporated into this year's (2023-24) Capital Priorities Program as well as through new regulation that takes effect December 31, 2023.

The reforms will address the changing needs of the province and ensure that Ontario is building schools faster and better utilizing taxpayer dollars effectively.

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Nurse Practitioners at The Blue Mountains Community Health Centre, 78 King Street East (Hwy 26) Thornbury

Melody Fox is a Board Certified Nurse Practitioner (NP) who has been providing services to The Blue Mountains and Collingwood community since 2020. Nurse Practitioners are health care providers who complete graduate level clinical education that allows them to practice autonomously. With their advanced education in medical sciences, NPs are able to provide rigorous, evidenced-based healthcare.

Services provided by a Nurse Practitioner include:

- Act as the primary care provider for you and your family, similar to a family physician
- Help you manage and improve your physical and mental health
- Conduct medical and physical assessments
- Order and interpret tests, such as medical imaging and bloodwork
- Diagnose medical conditions
- Prescribe medications and write orders
- Complete disability and extended health benefits forms
- Conduct minor procedures such as intrauterine device (IUD) insertion, removal of lesions, and tissue biopsies
- Refer you to medical specialists of any type
- Work with physicians, nurses, pharmacists, mental health counsellors and other providers to ensure you receive the best care
- Work in a hospital and more specialized settings across a continuum of care

Melody's practice is fee for service.
Appointments can be made by calling 226-668-4670 or by emailing melody@melodyfoxnp.com

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Connect With Me:

✉ Brian.Saunderson@pc.ola.org
🌐 www.briansaundersonmpp.ca

f MPPSimcoeGrey

✕ BrianSaunderson

in BrianSaundersonPC

*Together, let's make every day,
a better day, in Simcoe-Grey!*

Closing the gap in primary care:

Cancer and Chronic Disease Screening Clinic

Gillian Elmes, nurse practitioner and **Christine Fenton**, RPN, launched a virtual and in-person Cancer and Chronic Disease Screening Clinic this month at the Blue Mountains Community Health Center, 78 King Street East (Hwy. 26), Thornbury.

With thousands of local residents having limited access to preventative health care services, the clinic aims to increase access to routine cancer and chronic disease screening and treatment. Supporting Ontarians aged 21 and older who don't have a primary care provider, the clinic will facilitate timely, age-appropriate, evidence-based screening tests for:

- Breast, colorectal, cervical, lung and prostate cancer
- Hypertension and atrial fibrillation
- Diabetes
- Dyslipidemia
- Osteoporosis
- Sexually transmitted infections

This kind of preventative care helps people live healthier, longer lives by screening for diseases before symptoms develop. With early detection, we can help prevent disease, intervene early and avoid complications that happen with advanced or untreated disease.

How to get screened

Contact the clinic to schedule a virtual intake assessment to determine your individual risks, discuss screening tests recommended for you, and facilitate referrals. When test results are received, a follow up appointment will be scheduled at the clinic. In-person appointments are available for adults requiring screening for hypertension, atrial fibrillation, prostate or cervical cancer.

Publicly funded and private fees

Diagnostic screening tests and specialist referrals are OHIP-funded when ordered by a nurse practitioner, at no cost to Ontarians with a valid health card. At this time there is a fee for intake assessments and follow up appointments. The province of Alberta recently approved public funding for nurse practitioners in private practice - a decision we hope Ontario will soon follow as nursing associations advocate for new funding models for nurse practitioners in the province.

Contact the clinic

Email consult@nursEd.ca to inquire about the clinic and services. Phone daily @ 226-665-0660 to schedule an intake assessment.

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If you are looking for something to do on **Saturday, January 13th** and are in the Thornbury area, stop into the BVCC and support our Hwy 26'ers old timers 5th annual CLOWE CLASSIC 4 on 4 hockey tournament in memory of team mate and great friend Chris Lowe.

Games run from 10:00am through to our 26'ers head to head finale at 7:00pm. Bar opens in the lobby at 10:00am to enjoy a drink and probably see people you haven't in quite a while.

We are sponsoring a family skate to split things up from 2:30 - 3:00 and everyone is welcome to come out for a spin.

There are great prizes at our silent auction and raffle table, also a 50-50 draw and chuck at puck at 3:00pm following the skate. Auction table will close at 5pm and prizes will be drawn.

Help us support local community projects, local hospitals and local people in need going through unfortunate situations.

Also, support "Events for Life" at the concession.

On behalf of our HWY 26'ers hockey club we hope to see you there!



Saturday, January 27th
9am-Noon

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4. Must be submitted in English or French
5. Must not exceed the line or word limits specified
6. Must be **ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION**. Name on application/entry form and title page only
7. Contestants may submit **only one entry in any / each category**
8. Submission must include a **cover page stating the title, author's name and entry line/word count**
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POETRY — maximum 32 lines

SHORT STORY - word count maximum 4,000

ESSAY — word count maximum 1,000

MEMOIR — includes biographies, autobiographies, and travel writing — word count max. 5000

ENTRANT – DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON YOUR ENTRY – USE THE APPLICATION TO IDENTIFY YOURSELF

Strange Noises May Be Coming From The Marsh Street Centre In 2024

In addition to the normal sound of music, laughter, and conversation, we hope to hear hammers, drills, and saws. Makeover 2024 is YOUR Marsh Street Centre's new fund-raising campaign, with a focus on raising money for important repairs and upgrades.

Work is being planned to improve visitors' accessibility inside, and to update and waterproof the outside. Nearing its 100th anniversary, the Marsh Street Centre continues to be the heart of the community. Used more than 300 days per year, it hosts everything from the weekly Senior's Lunch and Learn, the Marsh Street Rock music program for youth and adults, private rentals for life events, to community pub nights and concerts.

"With such a diverse range of activities at the Centre, we need to ensure the building is properly maintained for today, and ready for the future" says Michele Myrah, President of the Marsh Street Centre. "It is important that we keep the building accessible and safe for our visitors, while preventing future damage due to the weather."

The Marsh Street Centre is an independent, non-profit, registered charity that relies on many dedicated and hard-working volunteers and the generous support of donors, business sponsors and grants from various levels of government.

"It is important for us to remain affordable for the community, but our operating and maintenance costs have increased. The building repairs are necessary, and we need help" says Myrah, "We will be tapping into available grant programs, offering sponsorships to local businesses, running fund-raising events and asking residents to make charitable donations for a tax receipt to our Makeover 2024 campaign."

This campaign builds on previous successful fund-raising for the new roof and the creation of the popular outdoor BBQ patio area. Thanks to everyone in the community who has supported us over the years. We couldn't do it without YOU!

There are many of ways to donate to Makeover 2024: Go to www.canadahelps.org and search for Marsh-Makeover., you can visit www.marshstreetcentre.com, or you can mail your donation to: Marsh Street Centre, 187 Marsh St. Clarksburg, ON N0H 1J0.



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