

THE Orléans Star

February 6, 2025 • Volume 39, No. 18

Next edition February 20

L'Orléanais
L'édition de
cette semaine
à l'intérieur...



The 'Photo Booth' was back for another year at the Queenswood Heights Winter Festival on Feb. 1. PHOTO SUPPLIED

Provincial election in high gear

By Fred Sherwin
The Orléans Star

It's hard to believe that the provincial election is already in its second week...which leaves just 21 days before Ontarians head to the polls to vote in a snap election called by Premier Doug Ford on Jan. 29.

As of press time, there were only three declared candidates running in Orléans – Liberal incumbent Stephen Blais, PC candidate Stéphan Plourde, NDP candidate Matthew Sévigny and Green Party candidate Michelle Petersen.

Blais was first elected to Ontario Legislature in a byelection in 2020 after serving as a city

councillor for Cumberland Ward from 2010.

He was one of just eight Liberal MPPs who were reelected in the 2022 General Election.

While a member of the Liberal caucus, he has served as the party's critic for Municipal Affairs and Housing, Education, Economic Development and Trade and more recently as the Liberal critic for Labour and Skills Training.

Among his accomplishments as an MPP was securing over \$100 million for four new schools, one for each local school board in Orléans and two school additions at Collège catholique Mer-Bleue and École élémentaire publique Notre-Dame-des-Champs.

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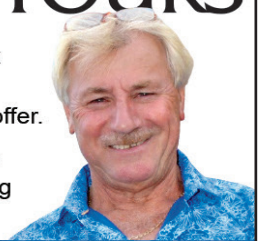


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Please contact Fernando at fernando@accuratepoint.ca for more details.



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Fête Frissons coming to the Shenkman Arts Centre on Feb. 9

ORLÉANS – The Shenkman Arts Centre will once again be hosting its annual Fête Frissons celebration on Saturday, Feb. 10, as part of Ottawa's Winterlude festival. This



free event is open to all with performances, art-making, workshops and storytelling. The event gets underway at 10 a.m and runs until 2 p.m., featuring performances by Brazilian children's entertainer Luciano Porto and L'habitant Voyageur Louis Mercier who is an ambassador of traditional French-Canadian folk music from Maniwaki, Quebec. Other highlights include storytelling by members of the Ottawa School of Theatre, demonstrations by the Gloucester Pottery School and activities organized

by the Cumberland Heritage Village Museum and the Ottawa Public Library. There will also be several food vendors on site. The event is being sponsored by the Heart of Orléans BIA.

Carivibe to hold winter event on Feb. 16



ORLÉANS – The folks who bring you Carivibe every summer, have put together a winter event to warm your spirit and beat away the winter blues. Carivibe Winter Carnival is being held at the Shenkman Arts Centre on the Sunday before Family Day (Feb. 16) and includes four different events on the same day for one all-inclusive ticket price. The festivities kick off at 2 p.m. with the Rum & Food Festival followed by the Carivibe Comedy Showcase from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. At 6 p.m., participants will be able to slide over to the "A '90s Ting Day Pawty" which will run until 10 p.m. And if you're still not tired after all that partying, you can

head on over to Mexicali Rosa's on Centrum Blvd. for the after party from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. Tickets \$49.23 available at carivibewintercarnival.eventbrite.ca.

Only two weeks left in Ontario provincial election campaign

Continued from page 1

He also helped push the Ford government to upload Hwy. 174, although it came with several conditions. In fact, Hwy. 174 is one of his key campaign planks. If the Liberals were to wrestle control of the legislature from the Progressive Conservatives, he would upload the 174 with no strings attached. He would also push to make sure widening the 174 from Trim Road to Rockland was a priority of any Liberal government.



Stephen Blais

When asked if he would consider regaining official opposition status from the NDP a victory of sorts, he said the only victory the Liberals are fighting for is a victory over the Ford government.

"We're not talking about forming the opposition, we're in it to win it," says Blais.

As for the call for an early election, Blais says Ford is simply being opportunistic while weakening the province's position in the face of higher tariffs being threatened by Donald Trump.

"He (Ford) already has a mandate to negotiate with the Americans, and we offered to work with him to form a common front in that effort, but he rejected our offer and decided to go to call an election instead and waste taxpayers money," says Blais.

Among the many issues Blais is focused on is investing more money into health care and creating more family doctors in Orléans and across the province; providing tax breaks to middle class families that would save an

average of \$1,150 a year; eliminating the HST on electricity and heating bills; and lowering the corporate tax rate for small businesses.

Blais' main challenger is Plourde, who was only nominated on Jan. 29, the day the election was called.

He is a retired Colonel in the Canadian military having served in the Royal Canadian Medical Service. He is fluently bilingual and proud of his mixed heritage, having a French Canadian Métis



Stéphan Plourde

serviceman father and a Korean immigrant mother.

This will be the second time that Michelle Petersen is representing the Green Party in a provincial election. She ran in Orléans in 2020 and managed to get 2,359 votes.

According to her bio, Petersen is a proud Franco-Ontarian and social services professional who is dedicated to supporting gender-based violence survivors, francophone rights, and community development in Orléans.

NDP candidate Matthew Sévigny is the son of a military family, he is a passionate advocate for his communities, including Francophones, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities.



Michelle Petersen

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Petrie Island is a favourite location for local ice fishermen

By Rebecca Kwan
The Orleans Star

There is no shortage of ice fishing huts on the icy waters of Petrie Island in Orléans. Ice fishing enthusiasts take advantage of the coldest months of the year to go fishing.

Yannick Loranger owns a fishing cabin rental business in the east end and he rents them out to ice fisherman who set them up on the ice covered Ottawa River beside Oziles Bait and Tackle Shop.

Unlike last year when unseasonably warm weather shortend the ice fishing season considerably, Loranger is very busy this winter and is seeing an increase in rental requests.

“Last year was by far my worst rental year in 10 years,” he recalls. “This year, at the moment, I have cabins rented every day until mid-February,” reports the delighted entrepreneur.

According to Loranger, the cold temper-atures this winter,

combined with the open-ing of the Rideau Canal, are helping to spark enthusiasm among ice fishing enthusiasts.

“Because the Rideau Canal is open, it makes people want to do outdoor, winter activities, more than last year or the year before,” he says.

Loranger recalls that there was almost no huts on the frozen waters of Petrie Island last year.

“It really wasn’t a good year,” says Loranger. “There was a perception that the ice was unsafe, which was not the case. But we can’t blame people for being wary of ice when there is a winter where there is no extreme cold, like last year. It’s true that when there are less cold winters, people are less inclined to be on the ice. That is very, very understandable.”

Loranger also notes that Ottawa winters are a lot more mild than they were 10 or 15 years ago.

The latter does not hide the fact that the future of ice fishing seems

uncertain to him, with changing temperatures and unpredictable winters. He is, however, keeping his fingers crossed that the curen winter seasons will be good for his business.

Sherif Awad is a fishing guide and leader of a group that offers guided fishing services in the region. He also believes that the ice fishing season is getting shorter every year.

According to Awad, the quality and quantity of ice leaves more and more to be desired.

“It worries me about the survival (of ice fishing) if the current trend continues or intensifies,” he says. “I remember four or five years ago I was fishing through 50 inches of solid ice. Today, I’m lucky if I can find as pot with more than eight inches of ice

Awad has gone ice fishing on Petrie Island once so far this winter. He enjoys exploring other ice surfaces in the Federal Capital Region during the cold season.



Yannick Loranger, who owns a fishing cabin rental business east of Ottawa, has been very busy this winter. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

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Educate yourself

And so it begins. Ontario premier Doug Ford has called a snap election for Feb. 27, kicking off another election cycle that will include a federal election, likely to take place this spring.

In calling a quick election, Ford is hoping to take advantage of the 18-point lead the Conservatives currently have in the polls over the Liberals, under the guise that he needs a “strong mandate” in order to stand up to Donald Trump and the threat of higher tariffs.

The truth is that he already has a strong mandate by the fact that the Conservatives currently occupy 79 of the 124 seats in the Ontario Legislature. The NDP have 28 seats, the Liberals nine, the Green Party three and the rest are all occupied by independents.

A skeptic might say he’s greedy, or at the very least an opportunist. The fact is that there’s just as good a chance he might lose a couple of seats rather than pick any up.

As for the Liberals, while their chances of forming the next government are slim at best, the snap election actually comes as good news as it gives them a chance to once gain become the official opposition. In the 2022 General Election, they only managed to pick up one seat after being reduced to just seven seats in 2018. They gained another seat since, but they are still 19 seats shy of the NDP.

With all that said, it is still up to you and I and the rest of Ontario voters to decide who gets elected.

The right to vote is an important responsibility and one that should not be taken lightly by those who simply vote along party lines.

During every election the call arises to institute mandatory voting, but while I don’t argue not enough people vote, the even bigger problem we have in Canada is that not enough people who do vote bother to educate themselves on the issues, especially since we have this wonderful thing called the Internet at our fingertips.

The Internet allows us to easily educate ourselves about those issues that matter most to us and to size up the individual candidates in our specific riding. In Orléans, you have Liberal incumbent Stephen Blais, Progressive Conservative candidate Stéphan Plourde, Green Party candidate Michele Petersen and an NDP candidate who had still not been chosen when I sat down to write this editorial.

So please take the time to do a little research, educate yourself on the issues and where each party stands, and vote accordingly – even if you’re voting along party lines, or simply against a particular party or leader. It’s the least any of us should be expected to do.

– Fred Sherwin

THE Orléans Star

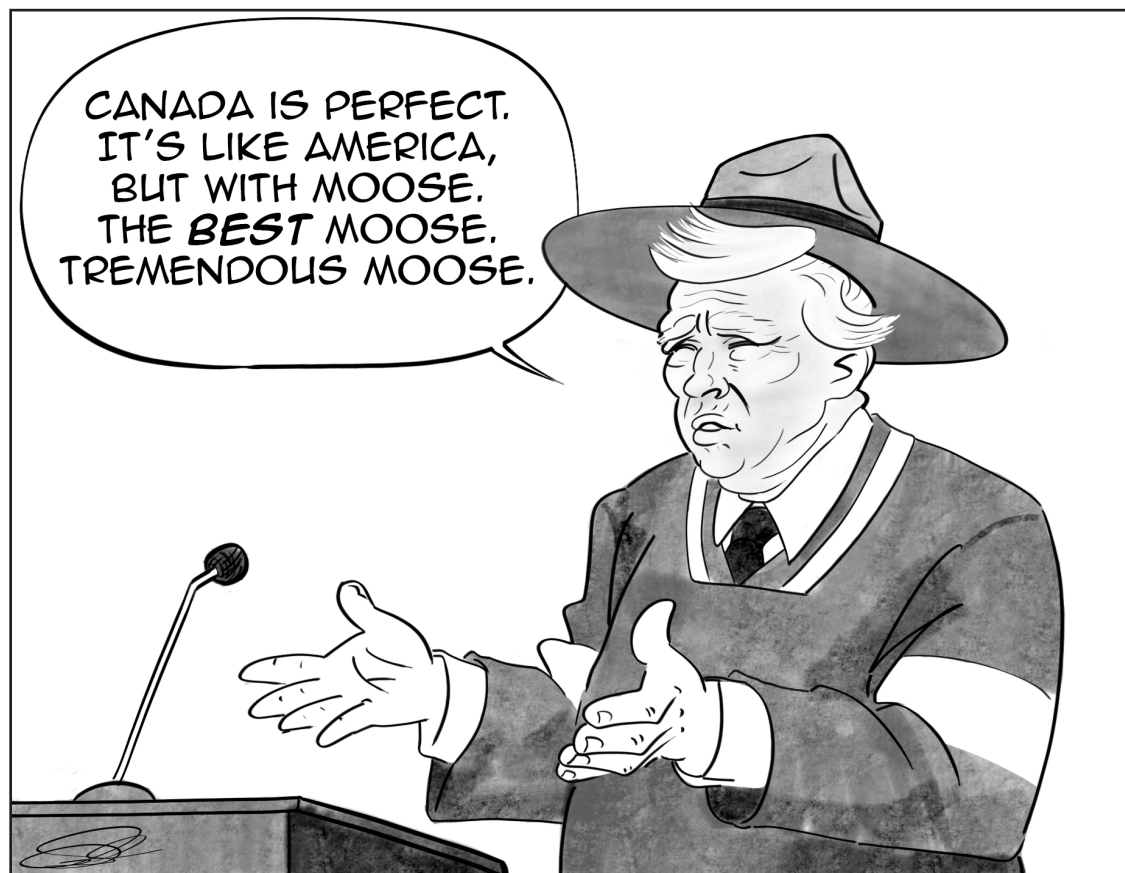
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February is Black History Month in Canada, let’s celebrate together

I want to start by recognizing that February is Black History Month, a month when we honour the legacy of Black Canadians and their immense contributions and strength.

I want to thank the entire Black community in Orléans for your community engagement and valuable contributions to our culture and the entire community of Orléans.

This year’s Invictus Games will be held in Vancouver from Feb. 8-16. On Jan. 29, I had the honour to meet with two Orléans residents and athletes participating in the Games. Good luck to Mona Robillard and Louise Smith. Orléans and Canada will be cheering for you!

Wishing a happy Lunar New Year to our East Asian communities as they welcome the Year of the Snake, symbolizing wisdom, strength, and intelligence.

Green public transportation in the East End is an important part of the transit future of Ottawa. I was thrilled to see firsthand the work being done at the Orléans LRT Trim Station on Jan. 30 and to thank the project leaders and crew on site for their work.

Over the last weeks, I had the pleasure of visiting several seniors’ residences. I’m always amazed by the conversation we have and a great occasion to remind them how important staying active physically and mentally is.

On Feb 1, I had the privilege of presenting the

King Charles III Coronation Medal to 35 outstanding individuals from our community on behalf of the Government of Canada (30) and the Government of Ontario (5) in a ceremony that took place in the

beautiful hall at the St-Joseph d’Orléans Church.

As Winterlude is in full gear, the Shenkman Arts Centre is holding its annual free event “Fête Frissons”, this Sunday, Feb. 9, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. with performances, art making, workshops, story-

telling, face painting, and, of course, outdoor fun in the snow.

The HST tax break will continue until Feb. 15. This tax exemption is helping reduce the cost of food and other essential goods, allowing us to better support our local small businesses and restaurants.

I want to remind you that the deadline to nominate an outstanding woman or girl for the Orléans Leading Women and Girls Recognition Awards is coming up very shortly. You have until Feb. 14 to submit your nomination form, which you can request by email at Marie-France.Lalonde@parl.gc.ca.

Thank you once again for helping us to recognize the essential role women and girls play in our community by celebrating their accomplishments and their volunteerism.

La version française est maintenant disponible sur ma page Facebook



Commons Corner

Marie-France Lalonde

How to travel to Southeast Asia on a budget and survive pt2

When last I left you, I mentioned that I had tried scuba diving for the first time while on the island of Koh Tao.

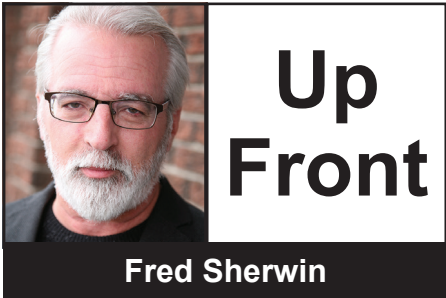
The island is located in the Thailand Gulf just north of its sister island Koh Phangan, and Koh Samui. It is best known for an excellent spot to snorkel and scuba dive. In fact, it is one of the cheapest places on the planet to get your PADI scuba diving certification. A standard 3-day course on Koh Tao costs about \$390. To get PADI certified in Ottawa will cost you about \$600.

I only had three days on Koh Tao, so I took the one-day introductory course, in which you spend about an hour in the classroom learning the basics, before going on two open-water dives. It was far cheaper than the three-day course, costing only \$130 with lunch included.

It turned out to be a wonderful experience, but it was also a lot of hard work. More so, than I expected. Because my ears kept plugging up due to the pressure, I had to keep positioning myself upright in order to clear my ears. I also didn't really see much. I saw a few fish and some gym equipment which had been dumped in the spot we dived, I didn't see anything that really wowed me. Later in my trip, I met a woman who saw a sea turtle on her first dive and others who saw a manta ray. I had no such luck.

After my stay in Koh Tao, I took a one-hour high-speed boat ride and a four-hour bus trip to Khao Sok National Park where I went on a half-day boat tour of Cheow Larn Lake in the middle of the oldest rain forest in the world.

The scenery along the lake was breathtaking. I must have taken over 100 pictures and videos. As you travel on the lake, you go past massively tall islands that stick out of the water like spires. We also stopped to explore a cave which was filled with stalagmites and stalactites, and had lunch at a floating



restaurant where you could take a kayak out for a paddle. The tour cost just \$55 which was quite the bargain when you consider that an all-you-can-eat lunch was included.

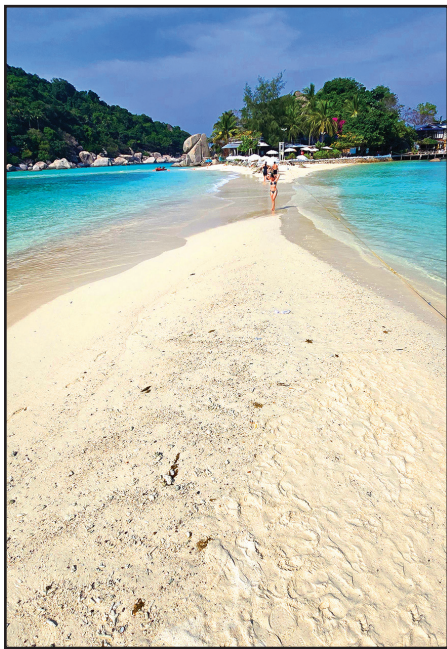
After spending two days in Khao Sok, I jumped on a bus to Ao Nang which is in the province of Krabi. It is best known for being the jumping-off point to get the Railay Beach, which is one on the most famous beaches in Thailand.

My plan was to spend a full day in Ao Nang to visit a nearby elephant sanctuary and then move on to Railay, where I had a reservation at a local hostel. I ended up staying in Ao Nang for four whole days and just did a day trip to Railay.

The people and staff at the Nomads hostel in Ao Nang were simply amazing, just as the folks were at the Nomads hostel on Koh Tao. Both hostels normally have an age cut off at 35, but I guess I had made such a positive impression on Koh Tao that they gave me a wonderful reference which opened the doors for me in Ao Nang. It was there that I met Sam, who is one of the managers, Melissa, Ririana, Dannie, Maya, Elliot, Andrew, Josh, Brad, Conor, and Dakota who is a fellow Bluenoser from Dartmouth.

It was also in Koh Tao that I met Isla and her brother Otis from Australia, Claire, Jordy, Ryan, Jordan, Allie, Iona, Mia, Jake, Yannick and Sam and Sandra who are two amazing DJs from Scotland and the Netherlands.

In between all the socializing, I managed



Khao Sok National Park, right, and Nangyuan Island near Koh Tao are just two of the must see destinations when visiting Southeast Asia. FRED SHERWIN PHOTO

to visit the Ao Nang Elephant Sanctuary which was definitely one of the highlights of my trip. First, you got to learn about the sanctuary itself and how they are rescuing domesticated elephants and giving them a home. Then you got to feed them and scrub them with mud before washing them off in a large pond. I'm a big fan of elephants, so it was a real treat for me.

I also went on a jungle tour to the Tiger Temple which is located on top of a mountain and takes 1,400 steps to get to, which I somehow managed to climb without having a heart attack. We also went tubing and visited a nearby hot spring.

After spending my final day visiting the vastly overcrowded Railay Beach.

I took a shuttle to Surat Thani airport where I was supposed to fly to Bali via

Bangkok, only I didn't get off at the Surat Thani airport, I got off at the airport in Krabi and didn't realize I was at the wrong airport until I went to check in.

Since I didn't have time to take a cab to the right airport, I managed to book the last seat on the very next flight to Bangkok and got there in time to make my connecting flight to Bali.

The only good part about taking the wrong bus was that I was able to meet Jana who owns a pole dancing fitness studio in Brno, Czechia and is able to travel several times a year.

She invited me to join her friends Tamara and Andrew for a trip to the beach at Ulawatu, along with their four-year-old daughter Vicki, who was absolutely adorable.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 ►



A view through one of the caves at Phra Nang Beach, which is far less crowded than the nearby Railay Beach. FRED SHERWIN PHOTO



The Ao Nang Elephant Sanctuary protects and cares for rescued domesticated elephants. FRED SHERWIN PHOTO

Winter fun, safe and sound: my helmet safety tips for you

As winter settles in and we all head outdoors to enjoy the snow and cold weather, it's a good time to think about safety. Activities like skiing, snowboarding, ice skating, and tobogganing are a lot of fun, but they do come with some risks.

One of the easiest ways to protect yourself while enjoying these winter activities is by wearing a helmet. Head injuries, unfortunately, can happen during falls or accidents, and wearing a helmet can make all the difference in preventing a serious injury.

Whether it's a concussion or a fracture, a head injury can have long-lasting effects, so it's important to be proactive and wear the right gear.

Different activities require different types of helmets, and using the proper one is key. For example, ski helmets are designed to protect against the types of impacts you might experience while skiing downhill at high speeds.

On the other hand, hockey helmets are great for ice skating and sledding because they offer protection for those falls on hard

ice. It's important to choose the right helmet for the activity you're doing to make sure you're fully protected.

Just as important as picking the right helmet is making sure it fits properly. A helmet that's too tight or too loose won't do its job effectively. When trying on a helmet, it should fit snugly and stay in place when you shake your head. For kids, be sure to buy a helmet that fits now, not one they'll "grow into." A helmet that's too big could slip off or move during a fall, which could compromise safety.

Finally, helmets need to be replaced from time to time. If you've been in a crash or had a hard fall, it's time for a new helmet, even if there's no visible damage.

Also, most helmets should be replaced every few years, as the materials can degrade over time. By making sure your helmet fits well, is the right type for your activity, and is in good condition, you can enjoy everything winter has to offer with peace of mind. Stay safe out there, and let's all make safety a priority this winter season.



Tim Tierney

Beacon Hill-Cyrville Ward 11

Under the threat of tariffs, it's important to shop local

As of the time I'm writing this article, I do not yet know if tariffs are being applied to Canada by President Trump.

Much has been written about the catastrophic damage these tariffs would have on nearly all sectors of Canada's economy, which is sadly, entirely the point of them.

As a city councillor, I am not involved in those negotiations, but I wish my colleagues in the upper levels of government every success in fighting for our country's best interests.

These tariffs will, however, impact all of us one way or another and it is important that we, as Canadians, are united.

In the face of economic tariffs, our strength is our wallets.

As shoppers, we always try to be conscious of what we are buying, and whenever possible, prioritize local options. Now, more than ever before, is the time to pointedly purchase Canadian products first, or find Canadian alternatives.

Canadian businesses started hurting when the threat of the US tariffs first began, and

with small changes in our spending, we can remind them who we stand with.

I am sure many of us remember in 2014, when a certain Ketchup brand was boycotted for shuttering its Canadian production (although they are eager to remind Canadians, they have returned).

Regardless, the backlash and damage to their bottom line was severe. Perhaps that should be a warning to other American companies, or American Presidents. We are the world's ninth largest economy, and America's largest trading partner, with nearly \$4 billion of goods and services crisscrossing the border every day.

There are now many websites, and resources to help us support Canadian businesses, and to more easily "Buy Canadian".

Websites like MadeinCA.ca are a great place to start. While choosing one product over another may feel like a drop in the bucket, it does matter and sends a strong message that Canadians will not take bullying laying down. We are far tougher than that.



Laura Dudas

Orléans West-Innes Ward 2

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Journey to Thailand and Bali a trip of a lifetime

Continued from page 7

While in Bali, I spent the first two nights staying at the Lay Day Hostel in Canggu, pronounced “changgu”, which was another wonderful accommodation costing just \$12 a night.

The most fun I had in Canggu was riding a scooter through the rush hour traffic. Definitely not an activity for the faint of heart. The roads are narrow with barely enough room for two way traffic and a few thousand scooters passing the cars on either side and even in between.

Now I haven’t been to Vietnam or India, but people I talked to who have been to all three countries say that navigating the traffic in Bali is on par with navigating the traffic in those other two countries with a level of organized chaos and mayhem on an epic scale

Unfortunately, or fortunately, I only stayed on the main island of Bali for a day and two nights, because my next destination was Nusa Penida, which is a little piece of paradise located off the southeast coast of Bali.

While on Nusa Penida, I stayed in a private bungalow in the hills called Bila Penida. It had a canopy bed, Smart TV and outdoor bathroom with a rain forest shower head – all

for the exorbitant price of \$48 a night. It was by far the most expensive accommodation on my trip and worth every penny.

Nusa Penida is home to two of the most scenic beaches in the world, Kelingking Beach and Diamond Beach. It also has some pretty spectacular snorkeling spots including Manta Point where more times than not you can snorkel with manta rays and sea turtles.

Unfortunately, I didn’t get a chance to swim with the manta rays, but I did visit both of the world famous beaches.

I came away from Kelingking with mixed feelings. As one of the most photographed places on earth, the viewpoint overlooking the beach is always super crowded.

Fortunately, the climb down to the beach is steep and extremely treacherous which severely limits the number of people who can make manage the trek down. The descent takes about 40 minutes while the climb back up with no shade and the direct equatorial sun beating down on you, can take over an hour. But once on the beach you’re virtually only in a place where the beauty of which is hard to describe.

As for Diamond Beach, I rode my scooter nearly an hour to see the sunrise, only to arrive to a torrential downpour which followed me

all the way back to my property. Still, the trip was worth it for the sheer majesty of the beach and the surrounding cliffs.

It was also in Nusa Penida where I had one the best grilled octopus I’ve had in my life next to the grilled octopus at Caravela, and I was able to meet up with Monnie, a friend from Australia who I first met in Mexico last year, and her friend Hermione.

From Nusa Penida I made my way back to Koh Tao for a day of snorkeling and exploring before jetting off to Bangkok for one final day souvenir shopping.

The worst part about the trip was the 15-hour flight to London followed by a seven-hour flight to Ottawa.

In the end, it turned out to be the trip of a lifetime and one that I have been dreaming about since my 20s.

Besides are the marvellous places I went to, I was able to meet some amazing people and made dozens of new friends who I plan to stay in touch with in case our paths cross again – and I was able to stick to my \$2,000 budget. The highlights, besides the people I met along the way, was the elephant sanctuary in Ao Nang, the boat tour in Khao Sok National Park, Kelingking Beach in Nusa Penida and snorkeling on Koh Tao.



Kelingking Beach in Nusa Penida, Bali. FRED SHERWIN PHOTO

The lowlights were having my underwater camera leak on my first dive, losing my drone in the jungle when the battery died and having to pay \$25 for a small scratch I caused on one of the scooters. Other than that it was grand. Bring on the next adventure.

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Beat the mid-winter blues at the Shenkman Arts Centre

By Jody Maffett
The Orléans Star

Is Ottawa's long winter starting to get you down? Are you tired of binge-watching shows on Netflix and getting lost in the bottomless rabbit hole of watching old music videos on YouTube? Then why not consider a night out at the Shenkman Arts Centre, which is hosting a series of live performances over the next few weeks, starting with the Girls Nite Out comedy review on Feb. 7 featuring four of Canada's top female comedians – Elvira Kurt, Jennine Profeta, Diana Francis and Karen Parker – along with musical accompanist, Jordan Armstrong.



Girls Nite Out

Tickets are \$20-\$30 and they're available at the virtual box office at shenkmanarts.ca

The comedians will take centre stage again on Friday, Feb. 14 when Lauren Lane, Wafik Nasralla, Simon Holder and Chad Noonan join together for their My Funny Valentine show. For their bios and ticket information, visit the Events page shenkmanarts.ca.

On Saturday, Feb. 15, the Shenkman Arts Centre will host the Carivibe Rum & Food Festival featuring the food, rum, music and comedy of the Caribbean.

One ticket gets you access to four events – the Rum & Food Festival from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., the Carivibe Comedy Showcase from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., the A '90 Ting Day Pawty from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., and the after party at Mexicali Rosa's from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. For tickets, visit the Events page at shenkmanarts.ca.

The BeYOUtiful Women's Expo comes to the Shenkman Arts Centre on Sunday, Feb. 23 with over 100 vendors there to empower women with beauty, wellness, fashion, and inspiration for a confident, vibrant lifestyle.

Looking ahead to March, Canadian alternative rock artist Bif Naked will be performing in Harold Shenkman Hall on Thursday, March 6. Tickets are \$45 to \$55.



Rankin family member Jimmy Rankin brings an array of talented Atlantic Canadian singer songwriters to the Shenkman Arts Centre on Tuesday, March 18 for a down east Ceilidh or kitchen party.

Experience the heart and soul of Atlantic Canada's music heritage, where every note is a celebration of the vibrant culture of Cape Breton.

The Band tribute artists Young Tungsteen comes to the Shenkman Arts Centre on Sunday, March 23 to present The Very Best of the Band including such classic hits as "Up on Cripple Creek", "The Weight", "Ophelia" and "The Night They Drove Old



Dixie Down". Tickets are \$62.50 and can be purchased online by visiting the Events page at shenkmanarts.ca.

And looking forward to the spring, four extremely popular tribute bands will be coming to the Shenkman Arts Centre in April beginning with Supertramp tribute artists Tramp of the Century who will be performing songs from the *Breakfast in America* album on April 6. The next day, the Australian Bee Gees come to town and on April 11 Johnny Cash and June Carter tribute artists We Walk the Line take the Harold Shenkman Hall stage.

Fête Frissons

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Jocelyne Lauzon has over 35 years of real estate passion

Jean-Marc Pacelli
The Orléans Star

Jocelyne Lauzon has been helping people find their dream homes since 1989. Despite the passage of time, her dedication to her clients and her passion for the profession remain very present.

"My clients often tell me that I haven't changed. I am always there to give them answers or find information for them. I still enjoy helping them," says Lauzon.

For this same reason, her clients know they can contact her from morning to night.

"I never found it difficult. I always found it fun. I always get up around 5:30 a.m. so my clients know they can call me at 6:30 and I will answer," she says.

This desire to help is nothing new. As a teenager, Lauzon worked in a residence for people with special needs. At school, she was always the person asked to meet new students.

"It gave them a good start and allowed them to feel accepted," says Lauzon.

Her ingenuity and enthusiasm to help undoubtedly paved the way to her becoming a real estate agent. A profession that she had in her sights from a very young age.

She also remembers a conversation she

had with her entrepreneur father when she was only 12 years old.

"He told me that I had everything I needed to go very far. He was always very encouraging, but when I told him I was going to work in real estate, I saw his face fall. I never spoke to him about it again. But deep down, it was the thing I wanted to do," says Lauzon.

At the time, prospective real estate agents had to be 21 to get into the profession. In the meantime, Lauzon studied psychology and worked for the Canadian government. When she was almost 22, she took the leap and at 23 she had her license.

"My father was discouraged," Lauzon says with a laugh.

After that, nothing could stop her. In just 18 months, she was ranked among the top real estate agents in the region.

Needless to say, Orléans has changed a lot since its beginnings.

"My little village has become a big city," she exclaims, citing, among other things, the population explosion that took place a little less than 20 years ago, the arrival of the Shenkman Arts Center and more upscale restaurants.

Over time, with hard work and reputation,

some client relationships extend far beyond real estate transactions.

"When I enter houses, there are people who tell me their problems," says Lauzon, who has always leant a supportive ear.

She cites the example of a man whose wife suffered a stroke and had to be placed in a residential care home. The man told her that he had to sell his house as a result.

"I told him to wait. That he was going to have to mentally recover first. Maybe there is a way for him to stay in his house for a few more years," recalls Lauzon.

Needless to say, the answer surprised the man. "He told me, 'Another real estate agent would have told me we'd sign right away! I told him I would be there in a few years and he could call me back.'"

With this human approach, it's no surprise that Lauzon advises new buyers to choose to work with someone they fully trust. She also advises them to be well prepared financially.

"You shouldn't go in blindly. Sometimes renting another six months, or 18 months, can change the whole course of our experience. You have to be careful and listen to the professionals," advises Lauzon.

This accessibility and frankness have allowed her to develop lasting relationships



Jocelyne Lauzon

with her clients. She also points out that her clients' children now use her services: "It's really a beautiful gift."

During her 35 years in the real estate industry, Lauzon has won several awards including the lifetime achievement Platinum Award and she has been inducted into the Hall of Fame.



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Light dinner will be provided for the first 100 in-person registrants.

J.A. Laporte founder and father of red light cameras dies at 99

By Fred Sherwin
The Orléans Star

The founder of J.A. Laporte Flowers and Nursery and the man behind Ontario's decision to use cameras to prevent vehicles from running red lights, passed away on Jan. 24. He was 99 years old.

Roger Laporte was born on August 2, 1925, on a farm along the Montreal Road, in what is now Beacon Hill. He was the son of André Laporte, a gardener and Yvonne Séguin.

After being tempted by the priesthood, Roger found an ideal life partner in Thérèse Charbonneau and the couple was married on Aug. 26, 1950, in the St-Joseph church in Orléans.

After starting out as a construction worker, Roger decided to return to nature with his family by purchasing a 52-acre farm in 1960 from Joseph Lacroix, in the northern part of lot No. 27 of the first concession in the township of Cumberland.

With great difficulty and hardship, but with great determination and faith, he set about creating a gardening business with the help of his wife and all the members of the family.

They built greenhouses, worked the land and first produced fruits and vegetables to sell in the Byward Market in Ottawa.

After two years struggling to sell vegetables on the Market, Roger switched to selling annuals and perennials and the business soon took off. Before long he was holding seminars in church basements, community halls and other various meeting rooms across the region.

Roger and Thérèse carefully nurtured the business as it slowly grew during the 1970s. In 1974, they expanded the business by opening a second location in Blossom Park. Two years later, they opened another location on St. Joseph Blvd. where Kelly Funeral Homes is currently located.

At that same time, Orléans was growing by leaps and bounds and all those new homeowners wanted flowers and other plants to beautify their homes.

But just as the business began to really bloom, Roger began having health issues and was forced into semi-retirement and 1982 he turned the business over to his son Jean and his son's girlfriend, now wife, Estelle.

The couple ran the business until 2024 when they both retired.

In 2017, Roger published his biography under the title *My Tree of Life*.

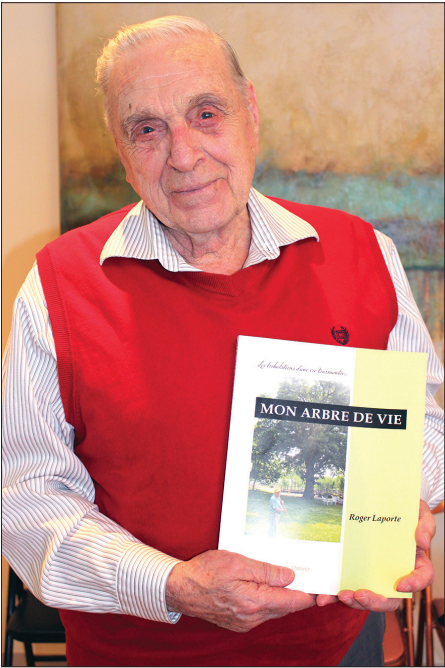
In addition to running his business, Roger was heavily involved in his community. Among other things he was a founding member of the Orléans Lions club, the Optimists club and the 60 club.

But the achievement he was always most proud of was in lobbying the province of Ontario to allow municipalities to use red light cameras in 1998 after his son Michel, 40, was killed in a car accident the year previous when a cube van ran a red light and hit him.

Roger was also proud of the fact that he was a founding member of the Rendez-vous des aînés d'Ottawa (RAFO), teaming up with, among others, Gérald Poulin and Fernand Leduc to create a "home of our own" for French-speaking seniors in Orléans.

A memorial service was held for Roger on Monday, Feb. 3 and was attended by more than 200 people.

(With notes from Alton Legault.)



Roger Laporte was the founder of J.A. Laporte Flowers and Nursery and the man behind Ontario's decision to allow cameras to help stop motorists from running red lights. FILE PHOTO

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OTTAWA-CARLETON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



NOTICE OF A HEARING

Enbridge Gas Inc. has applied to renew its natural gas franchise agreement with the City of Clarence-Rockland

Enbridge Gas Inc. (Enbridge Gas) is asking the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) for:

- **An order approving the renewal of a natural gas franchise agreement with the City of Clarence-Rockland.** This would continue Enbridge Gas's right to construct, operate and add to the natural gas distribution system and to distribute, store and transmit natural gas in and through the City of Clarence-Rockland for the next 20 years.
- **An order directing that the acceptance of the municipal electors of the City of Clarence-Rockland is not required in relation to the by-law approving the natural gas franchise agreement.**

YOU SHOULD KNOW

THE ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD WILL HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING

There are three types of OEB Hearings: oral, electronic and written. If you have a preference for the type of hearing, you can write to us to explain why.

During this hearing, we will question the applicant about its application. We will also hear questions and arguments from participants that have registered as intervenors. After reviewing all the evidence, we will decide whether to approve this application.

HAVE YOUR SAY

You have the right to information about this application and to participate in the process. Visit www.oeb.ca/participate and use file number **EB-2024-0358** to:

- Review the application
- Apply to become an intervenor
- File a letter with your comments

IMPORTANT DATES

You must engage with the OEB on or before **February 24, 2025** to:

- Provide input on the hearing type (oral, electronic or written)
- Apply to be an intervenor

If you do not, the hearing will move forward without you, and you will not receive any further notice of the proceeding.

PRIVACY

If you write a letter of comment, your name and the content of your letter will be put on the public record and the OEB website. If you are a business or if you apply to become an intervenor, all the information you file will be on the OEB website.

LEARN MORE

Ontario Energy Board

■ /TTY: 1 877-632-2727

● Monday - Friday: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

● oeb.ca/notice

Enbridge Gas Inc.

■ 1 866-763-5427

● Monday - Friday: 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

● enbridgegas.com

This hearing will be held under sections 9(3) and 9(4) of the **Municipal Franchises Act**, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.55.

Ce document est aussi disponible en français.



Ontario
Energy
Board

Two local athletes win individual sports awards

By Fred Sherwin

The Orléans Star

High school cross country runner Daniel Cova and volleyball player Élodie Lalonde recently won Ottawa Athlete of the Year Awards in their respective sports.

A student at École secondaire publique Louis-Riel, Cova finished second in the NCSSAA East and NCSSAA city-wide high school cross country championships in October and then surprised everyone with a first place performance in the senior boys division at the OFSAA provincial championships.

At the National Cross Country Championships in London on Nov. 30, Cova finished 27th in the U18 boys event and he made the podium as a member of the Ottawa Lions' bronze medal-winning team.

Lalonde was a member of the Béatrice-Desloges Bulldogs team which claimed their first-ever OFSAA 'AA' provincial title last spring.

She was also a member of the Ottawa Maverick Broncos community team that won a bronze medal at the national youth

championship.

She participated in Volleyball Canada's National Excellence Program and represented Team Ontario in both beach and indoor volleyball.

In September, Lalonde began her freshman year at High Point University in North Carolina and was a member of the team that won the Big South conference championship.

Several local teams were also named among the 2024 recipients of the Ottawa Sports Teams of the Year including the Gloucester Celtic men's premier soccer team which won the 2024 Ontario Cup title; the Cumberland Panthers U14 football team; the Louis Riel Rebelles girls hockey team that won the OFSAA 'AAA' Championship; the U22 Gloucester Lady Griffins who won the provincial U22 B Level title and were national bronze medallists; the Béatrice Desloges Bull-Dogs girls volleyball team that won the OFSAA provincial 'AA' championship; and the Louis-Riel Rebelles boys volleyball team that also won the OFSAA provincial 'AA' championship.

February 17th

Family Day Skate

Join MPP Stephen Blais on
Monday February 17th
from 11:00am to 1:00pm

at Bob MacQuarrie
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Presenting the 2024 Outstanding Youth Award recipients

Lona Kandil, 17

Lona Kandil is a Grade 12 student at St. Matthew High School where she founded the Tiger Times school newspaper. As editor, Lona oversees the newspaper’s operations by developing outlines and guiding a small team of student writers. She also transformed the club into a fundraising initiative for literacy development in low-income communities.

Among her many other activities, Lona is president of the school’s Arab Students’ Association. Last year she managed and coordinated a fashion show which raised over \$6,000 for the Red Cross to support families in the Middle East.

During Thanksgiving, Lona lead a team of student volunteers in organizing a community-wide canned food drive and also collected monetary donations. All of the proceeds went directly to the Ottawa Food Bank.

Lona is also vice president of the Cancer Awareness Society Club and is responsible for promoting the club’s fundraising events, such as the Cancer Awareness Society Coffee House.

Despite her busy schedule at school, Lona was able to maintain a 96 per cent average last year while receiving subject awards in Math, English, and History.

Last but by no means least, Lona is also a gifted creative writer and poet. For her various activities in a leadership role at her school while maintaining a high academic standing, Lona Kandil has been selected as a recipient of this year’s Orléans Outstanding Youth Awards.

Corina Carballo Maduro, 18

Corina Carballo Maduro graduated from École secondaire publique Gisèle-Lalonde last year with a 97 per cent average in the International Baccalaureate program which earned her the school’s Governor-General’s Medallion for the highest overall average in her graduating class. Her highest marks came in French and Chemistry.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is a very demanding academic program which require a great deal of self-discipline and focus to complete. In order to successfully complete the IB program Corina had to study four to five hours after school in the evening.

In between her studies, she managed to find time to take part in the IB leadership program and she earned her community service hours by helping to maintain the school’s greenhouse as part of the environmental club.

Today, Corina is enrolled in the biochemistry program at the University of Ottawa and she hopes to one day become a psychologist

For pursuing her dreams and for successfully complete the International Baccalaureate program with honours, Corina Carballo Maduro has been selected as one of this year’s recipients of the Orléans Outstanding Youth Awards.



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Orléans native Ivanie Blondin recently anchored the Canadian women's relay team to a gold medal at a World Cup event in Calgary. Photo by Lintao Zhang/International Skating Union via Getty Images

Blondin named Ottawa Athlete of the Year for record-tying 6th time

By Fred Sherwin
The Orléans Star

Orléans native and École secondaire catholique Garneau alum Ivanie Blondin has been named as Ottawa's Athlete of the Year for the fourth straight time and sixth time overall, tying her with fellow speedskater Kristin Groves.

The 34-year old won three medals at the World Single-Distance Long Track Speed Skating Championships in Calgary last year, including a gold in the team sprint. She also won a pair of silver medals in the team pursuit and mass start.

A product of the Gloucester Concorde Speed Skating Club, Blondin was the 2024 Canadian champion in three individual events, winning gold in the 1000m, 1500m, and the 3000m. At the first World Cup event of the 2024-25 season, she won gold in the 3000 metres. At the same event she made history by winning Canada's first-ever medal (a bronze), in the mixed gender relay, a new discipline that was officially added to the World Cup circuit last season.

Blondin was previously named as Ottawa's Athlete of the Year in 2014, 2019, 2021 (co-winner), 2022 (co-winner) and 2023.

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COMMUNITY BILLBOARD

FRIDAY, FEB. 7

TAPROOM 260 presents Johnny Franco live and in concert at 260 Centrum Blvd. in the Centrum Plaza starting at 8 p.m. For more information visit facebook.com/Taproom260/events/.

SATURDAY, FEB. 8

TAPROOM 260 presents Groove Night live and in concert at 260 Centrum Blvd. in the Centrum Plaza starting at 8 p.m. For more information visit facebook.com/Taproom260/events/.

SUNDAY, FEB. 9

FÊTE FRISONS 2025 – This free event at the Shenkman Arts Centre is open to all with live performances, art-making, workshops, storytelling and more. Activities run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. with food vendors from

Queensview Cafe, Maverick's Donuts and Yaari Restaurant.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 12

OYSTER NIGHT at the Orléans Brewing Co., 4380 Innes Rd. from 6 to 10 p.m. Indulge in the finest oysters and unwind with a drink in hand. We also offer wine and ciders for the non beer lovers!

FRIDAY, FEB. 14

DANCE YOUR HEART OUT VALENTINE'S DANCE AND FUNDRAISER from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Veni Portobello Retirement Living, 691 Valin St. in Orléans. All are welcome.

TAPROOM 260 presents Ryan MacIntyre live and in concert at 260 Centrum Blvd. in the Centrum Plaza starting at 8 p.m. For more information visit facebook.com/Taproom260/events/.

SATURDAY, FEB. 15

TAPROOM 260 presents Ryan MacIntyre live and in concert at 260 Centrum Blvd. in the Centrum Plaza starting at 8 p.m. For more information visit facebook.com/Taproom260/events/.

MONDAY, FEB. 17

FREE FAMILY SKATE DAY hosted by the Ontario Liberal Riding Association from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Bob McQuarrie Recreation Complex on Youville Dr. **FREE ENTRY/ FREE SNACKS.**

FREE FAMILY SKATE DAY hosted by the Orléans PC Riding Association from 3-5 p.m. at the Ray Friel Recreation Complex, Ron Racette Arena, 1585 Tenth Line Road.

IN MEMORIAM



Roger Laporte, 99
Passed away on January 24, 2025

Manjit Kaur Manes, 82
Passed away on January 19, 2025

Georgette Seguin, 91
Passed away on January 10, 2025



www.heritagefh.ca/obituaries

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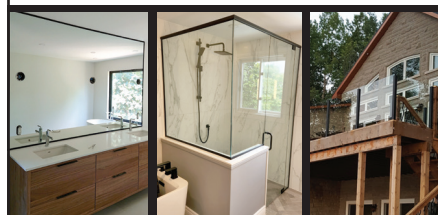
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