

At last, Manitoulin Island's summer arts schedule is rebounding

by Michael Erskine

MANITOULIN—The arts were heavily impacted by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, with gallery attendance limited, all indoor theatrical performances cancelled outright for two years, music festivals and other events either cancelled or forced into highly limited or virtual formats, but with

the recent stabilization of case numbers and hospitalizations leading to the lifting of provincial gathering restriction mandates being lifted, Island arts, music and arts organizers are cautiously dipping their toes back in to public events.

Just about first off the hop is the popular Café in the Woods roots music venue in

Honora Bay. "We have booked Boreal for May 27," confirmed Café artistic director Kerrene Tilson. Boreal is a "magical musical collaboration of Tannis Slimmon, Katherine Wheatley and Angie Nussey." If those names sound familiar, they should. These three hard working singer-songwriters, each with their own

longstanding, award winning careers, simply love playing music together and individually or with other artists have become familiar sights and sounds at the Café in the Woods shows. "We are all so looking forward to this," said Ms. Tilson. "We will be limiting the number of audience members

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Together in life—forever together. Donna and Jim Nevills of Mindemoya chose to take their last journey together on Valentine's Day. The couple was experiencing serious health issues and could not bear to leave the other behind alone. They spent their last "coffee break" in each others's company, then held hands as they took advantage of medical assistance in dying.

On Valentine's Day, Mindemoya couple ended their lives together

by Michael Erskine

MINDEMOYA—Jim Nevills wasn't going to go into the dance at the Sandfield Hall, he was only dropping off a few friends and then planned to drive back home. He changed his mind and crossed

the threshold into a lifelong romance that ended this Valentine's Day following a family coffee break tradition—together in life, forever together.

Mr. Nevills met his future wife, Donna McDougall, in the spring

of 1948. A pretty 16-year-old licenced hairdresser caught the eye of the 21-year-old veteran when he entered the hall. Ms. McDougall had travelled from her home in Providence Bay for the dance. Couples from across the area gathered for what, in those pre-online dating days, was the apex of the Manitoulin social scene. Mr. Nevills described his future wife to Petra Wall in a 2009 Now and Then column as "a good dancer and she seemed to think I

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New baby's compromised health, extended stays at Sick Kids, prompts fundraising appeal for the family

by Tom Sasvari

GORÉ BAY—A GoFundMe fundraising campaign has been initiated for Ezekiel Jabulani Allison, Ben and Buhle Allison's newborn son, who has a rare birth defect called Heterotaxy syndrome that involves the heart and other organs. There are different forms of the condition that vary in severity. Ezekiel's specific diagnosis is the worst-case scenario known as Heterotaxy-right atrial isomerism. Children with this condition have multiple heart defects. They also have abnormalities of the blood returning from the lungs to the heart. And the baby boy does not have a spleen, meaning that an infection can quickly become life-threatening. Ezekiel was born on February

19 joining his sibling twin brothers and a sister and parents Ben and Buhle Allison. "Ezekiel was born February 19," Mr. Allison told The Expositor. "Our family moved to Gore Bay from Calgary. I moved here in January 2021, and the first day my wife Buhle and the kids moved here was on my birthday on March 7, (2021)."

"No, we had never heard of Heterotaxy syndrome," said Mr. Allison who said the couple's other three children are all healthy. "It could have been a genetic component, or just a fluke that Ezekiel has this birth defect. It was certainly unexpected."

"The doctors say that one child out of every 10,000 births has Het-

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Contact with infected wildlife can likely spread COVID-19 to humans, scientists report

Based on case near London, Ontario

by Tom Sasvari

CANADA—In January, the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) reported that the virus that causes COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) had been found in five whitetailed deer in London, Ontario. More recently, a similar strand was found in a human who had contact with the deer.

In a scientific paper published in late February (that has not yet been peer reviewed), researchers say that at least one case of COVID-19 in humans can be traced to a strain of the virus found in hunted deer. One of the

authors of the report, Finlay Maguire (an assistant professor at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia) told The Expositor last week, "the results of sampling suggests transmission from deer into humans can take place. This is first time there has been evidence of this type of thing happening."

Mr. Maguire said a large collaborative of academic researchers in Ontario, along with the federal protection agency, wrote the paper. "We know that deer can get COVID, and we knew that there could be spillover from humans

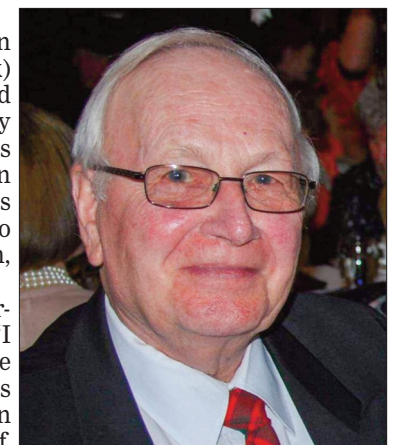
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The late W.J. (Jack) McQuarrie was an important Island historian, businessman, jurist and volunteer

by Tom Sasvari

GORÉ BAY—Manitoulin Island icon and historian Willis John (Jack) McQuarrie of Gore Bay passed away peacefully with his family by his side on Tuesday March 1, in his 91st year. The tributes have come in waves from those who knew this man who contributed so much to Gore Bay and Western Manitoulin, indeed to all of Manitoulin Island.

"Yes, we were very close," said former Gore Bay Mayor Ron Lane. "I originally got to know Jack because of my dad (the late John Lane) as they were very good friends even before dad was elected as member of



The late Jack McQuarrie

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Debajehmujig tapped to help with vaxxing Custom show will encourage youths to 'get the jab'

by Tom Sasvari

MANITOULIN—Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM) is conducting research within Indigenous communities, starting on Manitoulin Island and partnering with organizations like Debajehmujig Storytellers, to strengthen vaccine confidence among Indigenous youth.

Drs. Marion Maar, associate professor, medical anthropology and Maurianne Reade, associate professor, clinical sciences division and a rural generalist family physician on Manitoulin Island,



are principal investigators for the project, 'Co-Creating Vaccine Confidence: An Anishinaabe Theatre-based Approach to Strengthen Indigenous Youth and Young Adult Vaccination Support.'

Funded for \$200,000 over two years by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR), the team will combine Indigenous arts-based research methods with public health approaches to learn what matters most to young people regarding COVID-19 vaccination. The project aims to build upon

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